Labour Monthly

EDITED BY R. PALME DUTT

THE CRISIS OF THE LEFT

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(*Continued on page* 193).

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LABOUR MONTHLY

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The Editor of LABOUR MONTHLY will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can he promise to enter into correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.

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Notice to Readers

Readers who normally obtain their LABOUR MONTHLY *from newsagents may in some cases find difficulty this month as the Wholesale Newsagents' Association has informed us that they will not in future handle* LABOUR MONTHLY. *No reason has been given officially for this decision but it has been reported to us that it was taken in consequence of the symposium in last month's issue, "Press Freedom in Wartime," contributed to by H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, Lord Ponsonby, etc.*

This ban is still the subject of representations to the Wholesalers' Association, with a view to having the decision cancelled. Meanwhile, it means that newsagents must until further notice obtain their supplies DIRECT *from* LABOUR MONTHLY, *from whom they will get maximum Federation terms. It also means that* LABOUR MONTHLY *cannot be bought at any branch of W. H. Smith & Sons. We urge readers who obtain their* LABOUR MONTHLY *from a newsagent to let him know that he can get his supplies directly from us.*

Supplies of paper have been further restricted and we cannot promise indefinite increase of supplies. All readers are earnestly asked to place definite orders if they wish to secure their copies.

We have to apologise for bad delays in despatch throughout March. This was due to technical difficulties connected with the change of printers. New printing arrangements have been made which, whilst involving a change in the traditional appearance of the LABOUR MONTHLY, *guarantee earlier publication and quicker despatch.*

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Notes of the Month

This Crisis of the Left—"National Unity" and Left Unity—the Communist Party—Clearing the Issues—Consolidating the Vanguard—A First Step—No Short Cuts—Experience Teaches—The Common Movement—The People's Convention—Wider Co-operation—Government Offensive—Press Freedom—The B.B.C.—Government's Tactics—Disruption and Calumny—Internationalism Under Fire—"Ulterior Aims"—Immediate Programme—The Eight Points—"Red Scares"—The Real Betrayal of the Left—Poachers Turned Gamekeepers—Political Murderers—The Workers' Press—Who Are the Traitors?—The Crux of the Argument—False Charges—Hard Facts—More Hard Facts—A Lecture on Honesty—Whose Theory of "Revolutionary Defeatism"?—How Fables are Concocted—More Inventions—And More Facts—Marxism-Leninism No Dogma—The Final Calumny—The Retreat from Marxism—Defeat the Disruptors—The Acid Test—Unity Will Conquer—Here is Our Path.

AFTER nineteen months of war the controversies and divisions of the working class and democratic movement in this country are still great. But the recognition is spreading among wide sections that in the present urgent situation the most serious effort needs to be made to overcome these divisions and to find a common basis of action. Even though fuller unity, adequate to the great tasks which the war places squarely before the people, must necessarily await the slower process of clarification and agreement on the deeper issues raised by the war, it is already both possible and necessary to find elementary common ground in relation to the urgent immediate issues raised by the present reactionary drive of the powerful monopolist interests behind the Government. Last month, after surveying the warning signals of the advance towards a reactionary fascist "new order" in Britain, we drew the conclusion:

> "The present grave hour calls for the fullest and most active co-operation of all workers and democrats who are prepared to make a stand for the defence of the rights and interests of the people against the onslaught of the reactionary propertied and privileged interests. The victory of this onslaught is not inevitable. The struggle is still in front."

This month it is necessary to come closer to the concrete conditions of this problem, in relation to the present situation on the left, the tendencies and currents of opinion which are revealing themselves, and the obstacles which still stand in the way of a minimum measure of unity. For the most important immediate need of the present political situation in this country is the development of a broad popular opposition to the present

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Tory Coalition Government and the big business anti-democratic interests it represents—a powerful democratic opposition capable of making an effective stand against the reactionary drive, and eventually capable of replacing the present Government by a Government more representative of the broadest sections of the people.

THE outbreak of war temporarily shattered the powerful movement which was developing for unity and a broad popular front against the ruling Tory reaction, fascism and the menace of war, and against the fatal official Labour policy of veiled coalition and refusal to lead a popular front. New alignments broke the old formations. As in the last war a whole leading stratum passed over. Not only the official Labour Party and Trades Union Congress leadership, which had already in the fateful years preceding the war, as in the fateful years preceding the last war, been pursuing a policy of veiled coalition with the Government, passed over to open coalition (the interval between the declaration of support of the Government at the outbreak of war, alongside formal "independence," to the final stage of Ministerial Coalition taking seven months in the last war and eight months in this war); but a whole stratum of leadership which had played an opposition role on the left in the years preceding the war passed over to the side of the ruling class. "National unity" replaced left unity. The mass movement was thrown into confusion. The organised working class movement was seriously paralysed by the political truce and the industrial truce. The need for working class and popular unity and independence against the triumphant reaction was greater than ever. But it was clear that it would have to find new forms; it would have to be built up painfully, step by step, from the heart of the rank and file, from all those who had stood true to the struggle, from the new masses awakened by the war, against the opposition and sabotage of all that leadership, whether Right or former Left, which had betrayed them.

BUT there was one important difference in the political situation and the alignment of parties from the outset of the last war. In the last war the revolutionary workers had not yet got their united political party. In this war they have had from the outset their own political party, which they had built up, consequent on the experience of the last war and the collapse of the old working class movement, through the intervening twenty years. This achievement was now to stand them in good stead. Through the mechanism of their party they were able rapidly to overcome the confusion in the ranks of the vanguard during the very first weeks of the war. This confusion temporarily affected also their party, which failed immediately to estimate correctly and adapt itself to the basically new world situation following on the outbreak of war and in consequence endeavoured at first to combine old slogans with new in such a way as to produce contradictory slogans ("the war on two fronts"). As Lenin wrote in 1917:

"Too often has it happened when history has taken a sharp turn that even

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the most advanced of parties have been unable for a long time to adapt themselves to the new situation; they continue to repeat the slogans that were formerly true, but which now had no meaning, having lost that meaning as 'suddenly' as the turn in history was 'sudden.'" (Lenin, *On Slogans*, July, 1927.)

THE democratic machinery, however, of the revolutionary working class party, combined with its theoretical basis in Marxism-Leninism and its international outlook, enabled it very rapidly to correct this error. All the interminable and endlessly repetitive controversies and arguments which are to-day being trundled at exhaustive length through the literature of the left, all the new positions which are successively announced with an air of discovery and which only repeat one or another exploded fallacy from the first position of the Communist Party, all the dilemmas and entanglements in which sincere supporters of the "two fronts" theory find themselves involved when they try to translate their theory into practice, were all subjected to the most intensive analysis and critical review within the party in the fierce light of polemical discussion which followed the outbreak of war, were worked out to their final conclusions, and were finished with by the Communist Party within the first few weeks of the outbreak of war. The discussion was carried through every unit, organ and group of the party, and ended in 99 per cent agreement on the basis of the inescapable conclusions from a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the concrete international situation, including the new factors since the war of 1914, and the consequent tasks of the working class.

IN this way, through the instrumentality of the party, the revolutionary working class vanguard was able to reach a clear, firm and united position as an organised political force in relation to the war within one month of its outbreak—a position which has since stood the test of events, and not only led to increased membership and influence of the party at a time when other organisations have gone downwards, but is winning increasing support from wider sections of the working class. The prediction of Ercoli in his report on the war question at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International six years ago has thus been proved correct:

"Can we assert that there will be no waverings or mistakes in our ranks if war breaks out? It would be imprudent to draw such a conclusion, because we know that the moment when war breaks out is the moment when the bourgeoisie will strive to exert its greatest influence on the working class and when the Communist vanguard will encounter a number of great difficulties. That which we can assert is that, in contradistinction to 1914, there will be in all countries not a few isolated comrades, but a solid and disciplined vanguard which will remain loyal to the revolutionary teachings of Marxism-Leninism and which will undertake with all its power to apply these teachings in practice by following the example of the Russian Bolsheviks."

The record of the parties of the Communist International in this war has justified this assertion.

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THE clarification and mobilisation of the working class vanguard, of its party and of those sections close to the party and following its leadership, was the necessary first step. But it was only the first step. The main task remained to reach the masses of the workers, to awaken understanding of their own independent interests and confidence in their own strength; to combat passivity, hopelessness, capitulation, the closing down of the working class movement and surrender to Toryism in the name of "national unity"; to combat the flood of lying chauvinist propaganda and kindle anew the spirit of working class internationalism; to expose the war aims of the imperialist rulers and show what must be the aims of the working class and how alone those aims can be won; to organise anew the common front of struggle, stage by stage, in forms corresponding to the new conditions, for the needs and interests of the workers and of all sections of the people.

THIS task can only be accomplished, especially in the earlier phases of a war, when even the most reactionary regime is able to count on the support of the majority of the population, by slow, patient and tireless labour, enthusiasm and devotion, in the face of infinite misrepresentation, sabotage, the brazen clangour of the lie machines against which the voice of truth has only apparently weak resources to prevail, as well as varying degrees of direct suppression, victimisation and persecution. But the revolutionary lesson remains true that the masses learn by experience, and the task of the revolutionaries is, not to seek to impose ready-made doctrines, but to assist that learning. The experience of the people, as the war progresses, is on the side of the revolutionary workers, and creates the conditions which make it possible to hasten the awakening.

THE full theoretical understanding of imperialist war and its outcome, and of the necessary solution to the cruel dilemmas which it places before the people of every country dragged into its vortex, can only be firmly grasped by the politically trained class-conscious workers who already understand the character of modern society and the conditions of the working class struggle for power. But wide sections of people, who are by no means in agreement with Communist theories, can see very clearly that the upper class reactionary rulers do not represent their interests; that in the name of "national unity" and "equality of sacrifice" the profiteers are making fortunes and the big combines are increasing their powers over the lives and livelihood of the people; that labour and small enterprise are conscripted, while wealth is begged for as a loan at interest and the big monopolies have taken control of the state machine. They can see the old friends of fascism and enemies of democracy in high places of power; that the reactionary rulers, while concealing their war aims, manifestly pursue aims of the old imperialist type; that, while speaking loudly of "democracy," they suppress the struggle for democracy in India, applauded the suppression of democracy in France, and attack it in Britain; that a Prince Starhemberg, the organiser of Austrian fascism, who fought by the side of Hitler in 1923, who was Mussolini's protégé in Austria, is able to

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parade the London night clubs with a commission in the "Free French" forces, while tried anti-fascist fighters, with records of unexampled heroism, are sent to the concentration camp. They can see that the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress leaders have become mouthpieces of Tory policy, enforcing its decrees on the working class and closing down all independent working class activity and organisation; that the rights and gains of generations of struggle are being thrown away; that the urgent needs of the people are neglected; that class policy reigns in the organisation of food supplies; that the class struggle, so far from being ended with the political and industrial truce, rages with unabated fury, but in one-sided form, being waged with ruthless energy by the exploiters, while the workers' organisations are disarmed by their own leaders.

IN this situation, at this stage of development, while deeper issues are still only dimly seen, the spontaneous demand arises from many quarters of the working class and from many sections of the people, irrespective of general viewpoints on the war or ultimate questions, for a stand to be made on this or that issue; for a common front in defence of urgent immediate needs and interests of the working people; for the defence of democratic rights; for the independence of the working class movement, and the ending of subservience to Toryism and the profiteers. The Communists, while continuing to conduct propaganda for their whole viewpoint and programme, while seeking to win all these elements for the political struggle which can alone finally solve their problems, loyally co-operate and assist in every such common movement which is directed to promoting the needs and interests of the people, in whatever sphere, and however limited the immediate aims. They by no means seek to impose their general viewpoint on any such common movement, nor would they let any still uncleared differences on wider issues stand in the way of the broadest common front on immediate issues.

THE People's Convention at the beginning of this year represented the first coming together of these many and divers elements. The response to the People's Convention took by surprise its organisers nearly as much as the Government spokesmen, the political experts and the press representatives, and has kept it in the forefront of political attention ever since. The extent of that response revealed the ripeness, the readiness, the eagerness, the hunger of wide sections of people for such a common rallying ground of working class and democratic collaboration. That first assembly was a landmark in the development of the war; it was a beacon whose rays found a reflection and whose message aroused an echo in every country in the word. But it was only a first beginning. It was the small beginning of a great movement. We may say small, despite the one and a quarter million represented; because those represented were still in the main the already politically awakened; they reached only to a fraction of those who can and must be reached, who would respond to its message, the inarticulate millions who under the hammer-blows of war are beginning to stir from their slumbers, who are dimly groping, searching, discussing

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among themselves, seeking an answer to their questions. The destiny of such a common movement must be to reach to millions, to the majority of the people. The sponsors of the People's Convention would be the first to recognise how much broader a front of co-operation and mass support needs to be organised; this broadening of the basis of support is now the immediate task of the People's Convention movement.

SINCE the holding of the People's Convention in January there have developed in various spheres further elementary forms of wider co-operation in relation to immediate issues. Most notable has been the united stand of supporters of democracy, irrespective of their opinions of the People's Convention and its programme, against the B.B.C. ban on the employment of supporters of the Convention: a stand which was strong enough to compel a partial retreat of the Government. The National Council of Civil Liberties has from the outset of the war performed a courageous role whose value must be recognised by all supporters of democracy. More recently has come the announcement of the formation of the Press Freedom Committee on a broad basis of support. Within the Parliamentary Labour Party a growing minority has voted in the opposition lobby on a series of issues. Fifteen M.P.s (taking both divisions, and including tellers), including seven members of the Labour Party, registered their stand against the suppression of the *Daily Worker*; 21 (including tellers) for the amendment against the Household Means Test; 38 (including tellers) for the amendment to the MacDonald Bill; 40 gave their signatures on the issue of the B.B.C. ban. This is the more noteworthy in a parliament whose obsolete, ageing and unrepresentative character grows the more conspicuous and universally admitted as the original 1935 confidence-trick election which gave rise to it passes into the mists of antiquity. All these are instructive signs of the possibilities and needs of the present situation. It is now necessary to draw the practical political conclusions from this situation.

THE Government and the ruling class understood very well the significance of the People's Convention. They understood the significance of the first signs of crystallisation of a working class and democratic opposition, which could rapidly win wide support, all the more as the official Labour Party appeared to many of its own members, no less than its critics, to be passing out of the picture save as a part of the governmental machinery, and the Coalition Labour Ministers were becoming regarded as indistinguishable to the uninitiated public eye from their Tory colleagues. They understood that politics abhors a vacuum, and that the People's Convention, which already occupied the field, could in the future development of events, unless it were smashed at the outset, rally to itself all the streams of popular awakening against a Government whose essentially reactionary monopoly-capitalist character, as the organ of the bankers and trust magnates, was only thinly concealed by the presence of a lime-

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light rhetorician at its head and a top dressing of Labour bosses. They understood that such a united democratic opposition could check, reverse and turn into the opposite direction all their deep-set plans for the capitalist totalitarian organisation of Britain.

THEREFORE from that week in January the fiercest offensive has been let loose and maintained against the People's Convention. Herein has lain the central battleground of the political situation. The previous conspiracy of silence has been replaced by a blaze of publicity. The most intense combined total offensive that has so far developed on the home front since the beginning of the war, a combined offensive of the Government, the employers, the B.B.C., the millionaire press and Transport House, together with their ex-left underlings and snipers, has been concentrated against the People's Convention. For sixteen and a half months from the outset of war the *Daily Worker* had been left untouched. Within nine days of the People's Convention the *Daily Worker* was suppressed. Thereby it was laid down that no opposition daily newspaper was to be allowed in Britain. A movement with one and a quarter million adherents must not be allowed any press organ, or even to start a new press organ (of course on the strength of paper control regulations, which as mysteriously disappear as soon as it is a question of starting a new organ of official propaganda like *Die Zeitung*), at the same time as the tens of millions of copies of the official press churn out lying propaganda against it. The abuse of the People's Convention in the official press would paper a broad high road from Land's End to John o' Groats. The lies, made in all the fat confidence of the lack of facilities for reply, could teach points to Goebbels.

IT has not been only a question of a press offensive, or of direct governmental action as in the suppression of the the *Daily Worker*. All the familiar weapons of economic power, of control of the means of expression, of control of the livelihood of people, of intimidation and victimisation, have been brought into play. Reports of the refusal of halls or printing for the People's Convention have come in from all parts of the country. The employers in the factories in conjunction with the secret police have instituted elaborate spying systems in order to victimise the militant workers who support the People's Convention. Professional people have been threatened with the loss of their means of livelihood if they would not recant. The B.B.C. ban was a direct governmental signal, the lead from a State monopoly giving the cue to all employers; only the strength of popular agitation compelled a retreat, and Churchill had to be put up to cover the retreat; but the statements of Duff-Cooper sufficiently showed the real line of thought of Toryism. All the machinery of Transport House —passive enough when it is a question of taking up any agitation for the demands of the workers—has been active overtime to terrorise every working class organisation against participation in the common movement and to institute the most elaborate enquiries, threats or expulsions against every prominent individual labour, trade union or co-operative supporter of the People's Convention.

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THE tactics of the Government offensive are crystal-clear. The essence of those tactics are to *disrupt any united movement*. Division of the people means strength for the ruling class oligarchy; any beginnings of unity, extending beyond the politically conscious minority, would be fatal. From this follows the key point of the offensive. The key point of the offensive is to seek to *drive a wedge between the working class vanguard and its allies*. Hence the concentration of the attack on the Communist Party as the "hidden hand" behind the Convention, as "dominating" it and "manœuvring" with the "innocents" participating, as "exploiting" the just "grievances" of the people, as pursuing sinister "ulterior aims" not discoverable in the programme of the movement, but known to these eagle-eyed observers, of bloodshed, civil war, destruction of the national independence of the British people, "peace at any price" and "surrender to Hitler."

THIS fantastic phantasmagoria of lies and calumnies, which is stoutly maintained against every proved fact of programme, documents or representation, is not an inebriated leader-writer's nightmare. It is a perfectly clear and conscious tactical line. At all costs it is necessary to seek to sow discord, suspicion, division between Communists and non-Communists; it is necessary to isolate the revolutionary working class, the truest defender of the interests of the people, from the other sections of the people; to break the alliance that is developing; to hold separate, dispersed and impotent the manifold awakening sections of the people from that core which is the most faithful, fearless and politically experienced fighting detachment of the people, the militant class-conscious workers; to teach the masses that their true friends are the monopoly capitalists and not the militant working class and its party. Hence the campaign of lies and calumnies, which it becomes wearisome to have again and again to refute, but which we must tirelessly continue to smash day in and day out, in order to defeat the tactics of the class enemy.

SO far as the Communist Party is concerned, the Communists will know how to defend themselves. We are used of old to the unscrupulous methods of fanning the flames of jingo prejudice against socialists in wartime who remain faithful to the class struggle; we knew them in the last war; they are repeated in this war. Such methods are familiar from the gutter sheets of Tory jingoism; the bottom pit of shame is reached when they are used by those who dare to call themselves "socialists." "How British Communists Work for Hitler: by Harold Laski" is blazoned in flaming type across the front page of the *New York Nation* of February 15. So these faithful allies of their own imperialists "report" the movement abroad. Even so in the last war the Clydeside strikers, whose record is to-day the imperishable heritage and pride of the entire working class movement from that period of shame and collapse of the official movement, were assailed with the British-forged telegram of "Congratulations from the Kaiser." So Lenin was indicted by the pigmy Kerensky, and a warrant issued for his arrest, with a whole dossier of documents to "prove"

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it, as an "agent of the German General Staff." So Liebknecht was denounced in Germany as a "paid agent of the Entente." Every worker who has been through a strike knows how to assess at its true worth this type of reptile propaganda of the enemy class.

YES: the Communists have their "ulterior aims." It is not necessary to search secret history gossip columns of the Sunday press to discover them. They blazon them themselves from the housetops. The "ulterior aims" of Communists are to end the exploitation of man by man; to abolish capitalist slavery, its wars and its poverty; to smash and wipe out from the face of the earth the civilisation which produces the bomber and the slum, and which can only destroy the slum by the dynamite of the bomber; to unite the nations of the earth in brotherhood and socialist freedom; to hasten the advance of the united classless society of liberated humanity. We know that the path to this goal is not rose-coloured; that there are no guarantees of safe and easy ways, clinging to the old, while longing for the new; that we must be prepared for rough passages in the course of the relentless break-up of the old dying civilisation whose death we seek to hasten; that in the words of Marx to the workers: "You will have to go through fifteen, twenty or fifty years of civil wars and international conflicts, not only to change existing conditions, but also to change yourselves and to make yourselves capable of wielding political power." But we know also that the way forward is the path of the class struggle, of the international unity of the workers; that every path which seeks to align the workers with their own imperialists and to make them the slaves of the reactionary plans of their masters is a false path, leading, not to salvation, but to greater suffering and destruction; and that our path is the only path offering speediest hope for the salvation and liberation of the masses of the people from the miseries and dangers which to-day confront them.

BUT the ultimate issues of the final struggle for power and the solution of the crisis let loose by decaying imperialism and its war are not yet the immediate issues which confront the masses of the people for decision to-day or to-morrow. An enormous development of the political situation and mass awakening, such as we are under no illusions of imagining exists as yet, will be necessary before such a stage is reached; and the fulfilment of such a development will leave few of the landmarks familiar in present controversy standing as they are at present. Hence the barren, abstract, metaphysical character of much of the present controversy on the left, which speculates on future hypotheses *as an excuse for opposing and sabotaging present elementary simple common tasks.* It is quite correct that it is necessary for all class-conscious workers, for all serious Marxists, whose duty is to see ahead and to think for the whole class, to reach already clearness on these deeper issues and endeavour to spread understanding as widely as possible. But the present immediate practical tasks of the mass movement are at a far more elementary stage. The present immediate urgent task is to reach the very beginning of a

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common working class and democratic stand against the overwhelming reactionary offensive. Whoever utilises ultimate differences to oppose such a common stand is playing the game of reaction.

THE programme of the Communist Party is not identical with the programme of the People's Convention. The programme of the People's Convention is the Eight Points adopted at the first assembly in January —and no other. These Eight Points are such as every serious worker and democrat cannot but support. They are common ground. Indeed, even the critics are compelled always to preface their remarks by declaring that the Eight Points are unexceptionable; but they then proceed to invent hidden meanings which are not there, and which they solemnly proceed to declare are the more sinister because they are not there. Could lunacy go further? But these Eight Points already provide a most fruitful basis of co-operation for all workers and democrats at the present stage, irrespective of differences of viewpoint on other more controversial issues. They provide a basis on which men and women of divers outlooks, and coming from many sections, can co-operate and are co-operating; united in the determination to secure the realisation of these Eight Points, to build up the broadest common movement in their support, and to protect the interests of the people; and united in the determination to solve in common step by step the successive further problems as they arise in the realisation of this programme, as the movement develops.

THE unscrupulousness and political irresponsibility of those critics who seek to attack the People's Convention, not directly and honestly on its programme, but obliquely, by attacking the theories of the Communist Party, consists precisely in this: that they are playing the old MacDonaldite trick of raising the anti-Communist bogey in order to defeat left unity and a common front of the people. It will be remembered how MacDonald used to make great play at every Labour Party Conference with Lenin's warning of "heavy civil war" for England, in order, not merely to attack the Communist Party, but to oppose the most elementary proposals for a united front of the workers and a common stand on urgent immediate issues. Such proposals, MacDonald declared, were a "manœuvre" to be exposed and fought, because the real aims of the Communists were "bloodshed" and "civil war." This discredited tactic is now utilised anew, in wartime dress, by these "left" critics of the People's Convention (who have replaced MacDonald's favourite "heavy civil war" by something which they have dubbed "Lenin's theory of revolutionary defeatism"), in exactly the same way as it is furbished up once more by Transport House. This is the old device of the "Red scare" played up in the hope to disrupt any common front of the workers. The "Red scare" is always the weapon of reaction and of the friends of reaction.

THE combined offensive against the common front of the working people, against Communism and the People's Convention, is thus not only an offensive of the Government, Toryism, Big Business, the press and Transport House. It is also assisted and fed by the tiny group of

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former left representatives, who previously opposed the Tory "National" Government and the coalitionist policies of Transport House, and associated themselves with the Communist Party in the campaign for a united working class front and a people's front, against fascism and war and for a peace front of the peoples to prevent the impending war; and who now, when that campaign failed to win success, when the war which it was warned would be the consequence of the refusal of the peace front has come, have passed over to the other side, and eagerly offer their services to Toryism and Transport House as special informers and sharpshooters against Communism and the people's front. These have now compiled their political testament into a book, which they have appropriately entitled *The Betrayal of the Left.*

THE device of a thief to cry "Stop Thief!" in the hope of escaping attention in the subsequent hue and cry is an old dodge. It has not, however, previously been expanded into a book. *The Betrayal of the Left* is the old familiar "Red scare" dressed out in a nine-shilling volume. It is a compilation of journalistic articles denouncing the Communist Party and the People's Convention. It has received high praise from the capitalist press, and especially from the most reactionary Tory press. Under ordinary circumstances it would not have been of value to give any lengthy notice to a production of this type, which bears the familiar arid, negative and dismal character of the outpourings of the renegade who seeks to win favour with his new masters by denouncing his former friends. But its significance lies precisely in its appearance at this moment when the entire high-powered propaganda machine of the Government, Toryism, the press and Transport House is concentrated against Communism and the People's Convention. What would otherwise be an insignificant expression of sectarian backbiting becomes the ammunition for the main campaign of reaction to disrupt the workers' front; and therefore the necessary space has to be taken to deal with its contents, because they embody arguments that are repeated in other organs a millionfold to spread confusion and division on the left. The treatment of the type of arguments contained in this book is a necessary part of the treatment of the present problems and crisis of the left.

THE *Betrayal of the Left* is the unconscious record of a political murder by its perpetrators—the murder of a young and promising movement associated with the Left Book Club. Fifty thousand men and women, mostly young, new to political life and full of eager enthusiasm, had gathered together in common association through that Club on the basis of the fight for the united working class front, the people's front and the peace front, against fascism and war, against the Tory "National" Government, the ruling class and the reactionary policies of Transport House, in common study of Marxism, in association with the Communist Party and in support of the Soviet Union. The complete reversal of the entire basis and policy by the three "Selectors" in despotic control of the Club, without consultation with the membership, to unity with the Tory

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"National" Government, the ruling class and Transport House, and denunciation of Communism, Marxism and the Soviet Union, shattered that association. It was a despotic and anti-democratic action: every appeal for a democratic consultation of the will of the membership, for a conference of group convenors or delegates, for a plebiscite, was refused; there is no doubt what the outcome of such a democratic consultation would have been. The membership, unable to express their wishes in any other way, voted "with their feet"; more than half left. All the enthusiasm, the great demonstrations packing mighty halls in every town, came to a complete stop; the three dictators could not even find a committee or a leading group ready to attempt to organise a demonstration for their hated policy. The enthusiasm and the great demonstrations went on—but under other auspices, for the old fight. One of the most promising movements of recent times, into which much work had been put by devoted volunteers, had been murdered by its leaders.

THAT this collapse was not the inevitable technical consequence of wartime conditions, as was urged in apology, was shown by the simultaneous headlong advance of all organs which stood by the fight. Indeed, if we take Lenin's favourite measuring rod of the degree of active support and financial sacrifice of the workers for the press on the two sides in the labour movement during these nineteen months of war, the outcome of such an analysis is highly instructive for where the real feelings and enthusiasm of the majority of the active membership of the movement lie. In respect of the daily press, while the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress, with their millions of members, could not maintain a single daily paper, but had to depend on a millionaire trust with a Conservative Board of Directors to run "Labour's" organ, at the same time the *Daily Worker*, the collective achievement of the rank-and-file workers, leapt forward in its Fighting Fund from £1,500 a month to the amazing figure of £4,200 a month, until a Labour Home Secretary found it necessary to suppress it. In the periodical press, on one side, the *Tribune*, supported by a rich man, dwindled to a circulation not even exceeding four figures. The *Labour Monthly*, as our readers know, since the beginning of the war, increased its circulation to 30,000, despite cuts by the banning of its extensive foreign circulation. The sales of pamphlets and literature would show the same picture. Never has a movement been so rich in tireless voluntary devotion and financial sacrifice as the militant working class movement of this country organised around its party, in which it has placed its confidence, the Communist Party.

HOW dare these gentlemen speak of "betrayal" to the Communist Party? It is not the Communist Party that has passed over to unity with the class enemy. It is not the Communist Party that has passed over to the side of the Government of Monopoly Capital. It is not the Communist Party that has become the darling of Toryism and the *Daily Mail*. The Communist Party stands where it stood, proud and unafraid, assailed by all the four winds of heaven from every quarter of the camp of

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slavery and exploitation, hated as no other party by wealth and privilege, buffeted and persecuted; denounced and reviled by the jackals of the rich, the hirelings, the corrupt and the cowards; fighting without truce or surrender; the sword of the workers; the leader and organiser of their struggles; the hope of the oppressed. The Communist Party is the only party that will never bow the knee to capital, that carries on the struggle unbroken in every country in the world; for the Communist Party has no other existence save as the heart of the working class struggle, of Marxism, of the international working class; the organisation in which the future of humanity is enshrined. It is not enough that the Government and the police, the millionaires and their press lackeys, must all throw their stones; but these miserable ex-left runaways must add their petty pelting of mud. From all the mud and filth at such hands the record of the Communist Party gleams the brighter.

WHAT do they mean by "betrayal"? Apart from the sense in which they sometimes appear to mean by "treason" treason to British imperialism (a sense which need not concern us to discuss further here, though the implication of many passages in this sense is of the greatest importance for the real meaning of their position as vulgar bourgeois-national jingoism decked out in an "anti-fascist" dress), it is evident that what they mainly have in mind, and what is the foundation of their whole position, is an amazing and incredible distortion of the entire policy of the Communist Party preceding the war, and it is this distortion which they regard as having been "betrayed" by the subsequent policy during the war. They appear to believe that the Communist policy preceding the war, and the entire policy of the Communist International, was directed towards preparing the way, failing the victory of the peace front, for a war of British imperialism against Hitler, and to have guaranteed support for such a war, independently of any question of realisation of the peace front. This perversion is so monstrous, and so demonstrably false by the plain facts and official declarations of the party long before the war, that it is necessary to quote and pin down with absolute clearness the allegations of the authors and contrast the real facts; since this is the central pillar of the entire argument of the book on which it stands or falls.

HERE are the accusations: First, with regard to the Communist Party of Great Britain:

"This support of the war was the logical corollary of four years' ceaseless campaigning for resistance to Hitler—years during which Communists had denounced as 'leftists' or 'Trotskyists' all who had alleged that any war which might result from 'standing up to Hitler' would inevitably be, in view of the balance of class forces in the various countries, not anti-fascist but an imperialist war" (p. 2).

"The *policy that you and I advocated* was of course primarily designed to *prevent* the outbreak of war; but there was never the smallest suggestion that *if* a stand against Hitler resulted in war, we would then shirk the issue" (p. 5).

"Nor was there the slighest suggestion, either that we should 'give way' to Hitler if the U.S.S.R. was not by our side, or that we should refuse to fight behind the Tories" (p. 5).

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Second, with regard to the Communist International, the same policy is declared to have been the policy of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, while the policy in the war of 1939 is declared to have constituted a "reversal" of the policy of the Seventh Congress:

"There has been no meeting of the Comintern since the Seventh Congress of 1935, which adopted the Popular Front policy of 'standing up to Hitler' and of drawing a sharp distinction between the 'peace-loving democracies' and the Nazis" (p. 285).

"If in fact the Presidium met to reverse the policy agreed upon at the 1935 Congress—for, whatever the acrobatic arguments to the contrary, a plain reversal it was—the meeting in war conditions could have been attended only by members of the Presidium resident in Moscow" (286).

These are the accusations. If they were within a hundred miles of the truth, the main thesis of the book would hold.

NOW for the facts. First, the Communist International. The Seventh Congress Resolution on "The Tasks of the Communist International in connection with the Preparations of the Imperialists for a New World War" laid down explicitly the line in the event of the defeat of the fight for peace and the outbreak of war:

"The Communists, while fighting also against the illusion that war can be eliminated while the capitalist system still exists, exert and will exert every *effort to prevent war. Should a new imperialist world war break out, despite* all efforts of the working class to prevent it, the Communists will strive to lead the opponents of war, organised in the struggle for peace, to the struggle for the transformation of the imperialist war etc."

Clear enough. No need of "acrobatics" here. Further:

"The Seventh Congress of the Communist International, in outlining the tasks of the Communist Parties and of the entire working class in the event of war, bases itself upon the thesis advanced by Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg and adopted by the Stuttgart Congress of the pre-war Second International: 'If nevetheless war breaks out, it is their duty to work for its speedy termination etc.' "

Clear enough. Was there any other indication for the workers in the imperialist countries in the event of war? Yes; in the event of the U.S.S.R. being involved:

"If the commencement of a counter-revolutionary war forces the Soviet Union to set the 'Workers' and Peasants' Red Army in motion for the defence of Socialism, the Communists will call upon all toilers to work with all means at their disposal for the victory of the Red Army over the armies of the imperialists."

Those were the lines laid down. Where is the reversal? It is worth noting that the Sixth Congress Theses on War, which were explicitly re-affirmed

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by the Seventh Congress, gave warning that "the bourgeoisie will take advantage of the anti-fascist sentiments of the masses of the people to justify imperialist war." As for the "peace-loving democracies," the Seventh Congress Resolution laid down that "the policy of British imperialism is one of the factors accelerating the outbreak of a world imperialist war."

SECOND, the policy of the Communist Party of Great Britain. The Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.G.B. at Battersea in May, 1937, laid down in the "Resolution on the Fight for Peace" precisely and explicitly the same line in the event of the outbreak of war:

"Should the mobilisation of forces for the realisation of this policy be delayed, and should imperialistic war in consequence break out, the Communist Party bases itself upon the decision of the Stuttgart Congress of the pre-war Second International, re-affirmed by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International: 'If war nevertheless breaks out, it is their duty to work for its speedy termination, etc.'"

To this may be added the declaration in the Report on the Fight for Peace officially made at the same Congress:

"We do not pretend to guarantee the victory of peace against war; we say that depends on the struggle, on the forces of the masses. If war comes none the less, if the imperialists and the fascist warmongers let war loose, then our task is set forth in the resolution. . . . If in spite of our efforts and our struggle, in spite of the wish of the overwhelming majority of the people in the world, the warmongers and fascists and imperialists let loose new world war on the whole of humanity, then that war which they let loose, whatever the suffering, whatever the destruction, will be the grave of their doomed, dying and damned regime."

There is no room for misunderstanding. A case could undoubtedly be argued for claiming that the first incorrect manifesto of September 2 was a violation of Congress decisions. There is no case for the reverse. The pre-war declarations of the Communist Party and the Communist International made explicitly clear the line in the event of war resulting from the refusal of the peace front.*

CANNOT these gentlemen read? On the contrary, they are most industrious in compiling snippets from fleeting journalistic articles in order to deduce from them towering mountains of the most fantastic conclusions. But the official documents, the perfectly clear, precise authoritative

It is worth noting that this attitude extended beyond the Communists at the time to representatives of the left who were fighting for the peace front. Thus Zilliacus, not then an official of the Ministry of Information, introduced a resolution at the Labour Party Conference in June, 1939, declaring that the policy of the National Government through refusing the peace front and a pact with the Soviet Union was leading to the menace of an imperialist war or "war for colonial possessions" between Britain and Germany, and that the Labour Party should declare beforehand that it would refuse to support such a war ("pledges itself not to support any war for colonial possessions until these first steps have been taken"* i.e. a pact with the Soviet Union, etc.). The resolution and the speech of Zilliacus were muddled, but they are indicative of lines of thought among the Left at the time. The resolution received 286,000 votes, or a little more than the vote for the People's Front.

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statements of the policies they profess to be describing and discussing, appear to be a closed book to them. How is it possible that they can have read these inescapably plain statements and still maintain such monstrous untruths and exact denials of them? Truly, "lying is a European power." For these myths are spread daily a millionfold in every journal, while the facts are open for any one to ascertain for himself. Either they have not read these plain declarations, in which case they have not troubled to acquaint themselves with the elementary facts on the subjects they profess to discuss. Or if they have, they are deliberately spreading the most monstrous untruths which they know to be untrue. There is a great deal of sermonising lecturing to Communists in this book about truth-telling and lying. The sanctimonious self-righteousness of such lecturing from such a source to the most forthright and through-and-through honest political movement in human history is nauseating. There is, too, a deeper meaning of honesty in the sense of making a serious intellectual effort to understand a case with which one deals, to equip oneself with the necessary basis of information for a judgment, and to deal with it on that basis. That deeper honesty, which is the heart of Marxism, is unknown to these gentlemen.

THE second main basis of the book is built on a farrago of distortions and inventions which are presented as "Lenin's theory of revolutionary defeatism" or "the Communist theory of revolutionary defeatism." Here it is unfortunately not possible in these pages to pursue the distortions with the same explicitness as we have employed for the previous set; but we may assure our readers that there is every whit as much basis. Conscious of the moral superiority of their position under the protection of the kindly eye of authority, and knowing that facilities for reply will not be available for their opponents, our heroes here become most valiant gladiators, laying about them with a will and spreading their myths at sweet pleasure. Indeed, they become almost as valiant as that courageous and outspoken Liberal, Mr. Cummings, who, after Sir John Anderson had informed the *Daily Worker* that it would be suppressed if it opposed the war, fearlessly and tirelessly asked the *Daily Worker* day after day whether it opposed the war. British Liberals are a wonderful breed; and it is sometimes difficult to know whether to admire most the profundity of their intelligence, the integrity of their moral fibre or the delicacy of their consideration for those less favourably placed than themselves.

IT must suffice for the moment to make one or two incidental remarks. The theory as presented by these authors is a concoction which bears about as much relation to Lenin as a Catholic press version of Communism does to Marx. The concoction has become so universally repeated in every newspaper in the land that it has by now become accepted as gos-

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ciation sinks to the level of the gutter press, and seeks in the same way to "prove" an absurdity by an industrious compilation of snippets, showing how these wicked Communists insist on concentrating on the crimes of their own ruling class instead of joining the jingo bandwaggon and "killing Kruger with their mouths." Typical of their method is the prize piece in their collection, the article of the German Communist Ulbricht in the beginning of 1940, solemnly printed as an appendix in order to "prove" that the real policy of the German Communists is not directed against Hitler, but against British imperialism. Once again the method of these searchers after truth is instructive and characteristic. If they wished to know the policy of the German Communist Party, it is available to them in the manifestoes and statements of the party which have been published. one aspe available to them during that period in the joint manifesto of the simple. It is the said British Communist Parties, published in the *Daily* Or even worse. For anifesto of the German, Austrian and Czechoslovak Here the traducers have blished in December, 1939; in the long official lessly brandish it in quo Communists' position by Florin published already "Lenin's theory of 'bloods as usual, they rise superior to the obvious facts we find every little prattling fasten on a polemical article by a German hack journalist or pub ected to combating the thesis of a German Social on and discussing "Le ted support of British imperialism as the liberator "the well-known Com , and therefore necessarily requiring to expose the writings on imperialis f British imperialism. From this isolated polemical revolutionary common untain of monstrous conclusions, while completely worker. But the Gollan ments and evidence. Could hypocritical dishonesty the drivel of a spy-mani

IN the second place, would be possible to expose and smash every applied only to the argument of this book as exhaustively in the light quent on this, it is ble facts. But we must apologise to our readers for country is "slavishly in ch space on rubbish of such poor quality, unworthy and "undialectically" a steel. It only remains to add that the line of the tions of this war and t cover of the usual attack on Communism, is the false. Lenin made clea nment of Marxism and the class struggle and the elaborating applied to w ndue concentration on the class struggle is ex- ism opening from 1914 267). "To imagine that Marx has told the whole vulsions resulting from th "The formation of the Comintern has turned

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*An example of the currency . The Soviet Union is " paying a frightful price liberal veteran, H. W. Nevi and its leadership is marked by "insane explaining that he "has not st ective is for a new era of capitalist expansion: "Daily Worker" because he "ha the war" (how he could hope this new possibility of the further development only independent sources of inf to Marx, no economic system ever disappears tha he gets the news from t development has been exhausted. Therefore it is of both or either is in favou over this stage. On the contrary, it must be lived sented by the Government at issue is whether it will be lived through in the with it." "As has been repre New Deal American style" (p. 233).

No doubt also "If Lenin is has been represented by Mr real theoretical basis of this book and of the the fault of the old liberal ca Social Democracy: the open return from to the true facts, feed him th the consequent return to the celebration of

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bourgeois morality and religion*, "the liberation of mankind by means of 'love' in place of the emancipation of the proletariat through the economic transformation of production" (Engels, "Feuerbach"), pietistic Christian conclusions and denunciation of the crimes of the revolutionaries amid general rejoicings of the finance-capitalist brigands and their press at the return of the prodigals. A commonplace evolution.

BUT the evolution or line of this particular little grouping is not politically important. What is important is that this confusion-mongering and petty slander campaign shall not be allowed to serve its purpose in the interests of Tory reaction to divide and disrupt the awakening and gathering ranks of the left, of the militant workers, Labour Party members, trade unionists, co-operators, professional people and representatives of all sections who begin to feel the necessity of a common stand against the overpowering drive of reaction and the big interests which exploit them. These paper conflicts of these heroes who always direct their fire against the representatives of the revolutionary workers, these battles of quotations and exhumations and post-mortems on misunderstood past policies, these are not the real front of the fight the working people of this country have to wage for the protection of their interests against those who exploit them and who, in the name of the fight against fascism, are seeking to introduce fascism here. It has only been necessary to yield much grudged space to these academic controversies in order that they shall not be allowed to stand in the way of the real fight.

WHAT have the polemists of the left done to fight and smash a Vansittart, whose Black Hundreds rubbish is sold by the hundreds of thousands on every bookstall to corrupt the minds of the people with the most unscrupulous pseudo-history? What have these panegyrists of a new era of capitalism done to expose the economic fleecing of the people which is taking place through the forms of war economy? It is not here that these sharpshooters direct their missiles. And this exposes

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*A very pretty world epoch for such a return. As Plekhanov said:

> "Marx said very truly that the greater the development of antagonism between the extant forces of production and the extant social order, the more does the ideology of the ruling class become permeated with hypocrisy. In addition, the more effectively life unveils the mendacious character of this ideology, the more does the language used by the dominant class become sublime and virtuous."

That goes for Strachey's discoverey of "love" and "truth" blossoming out at this particular moment like Pétain's "spiritual regeneration," the Archbishops' Manifesto and "Times" campaign for the re-establishment of the religious basis of education, and all the other familiar signs of the reactionary fascist drive. Let Engels have the word again:

> "But love!—yes, with Feuerbach, love is everywhere and at all times the wonder-working god who should help to surmount all difficulties of practical life—and at that in a society which is split into classes with diametrically opposite interests. At this point the last relic of its revolutionary character disappears from the philosophy, leaving only the old cant; Love one another—fall into each other's arms regardless of distinctions of sex or estate—a universal orgy of reconciliation."

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their true alignment. It is sufficient indication of the true colour of these gentlemen that they concentrate their attack against the representatives of the revolutionary workers and not against the ruling reaction. In other words, they are no part of the left, though they still seek to sail under its colours; they have long broken all connections with it; they are representatives of the camp of reaction seeking to disrupt the camp of the left. From this follows a simple test of the left. Who are "the left"? All those who seek to play their part in the common front of the people against capitalist reaction. The acid test of the left is the attitude to the united working class front and the people's front.

THE People's Convention claims no monopoly in any particular form of the common front. There may have to be many further developments and evolutions in form, as the movement advances. But what is clear is that some such common front of all sections of the working people, as those participating in the People's Convention are striving to help to build, is a life-and-death necessity for the people of this country in the struggles before them and the issues that are already urgently developing. Even those who still hold apart from it or criticise it find, the moment that they cease to follow docilely in the camp of reaction and seek to discover some means of effectively opposing the reactionary policies which they deplore, that they have no alternative to the necessity of some such common movement. The ban of the Executive of the Labour Party on all resolutions from local organisations has brought the issue to a head for masses of people in the labour movement. On this ban the Editor of the New Statesman, who in his own words "objected strongly to the People's Convention," found himself driven to comment: "If the Executive is allowed to get away with it the Party will be as good as dead. Then it will be time for a real 'People's Convention'" (15.3.41). The promoters of the People's Convention understood this need already; and those who seek to help will have to find their place in the common movment. Priestley, who with others advocates a New Britain after the war, but does not speak of the class struggle which can alone achieve a New Britain for the people and not for the rich, complained the other day to a meeting of Labour bureaucrats that they were failing to back him up against the pressure of reactionary influences in the B.B.C. Does he really expect Coalition Labour to be other than the ally of Toryism? Has he not realised that, if he wishes seriously to fight for the new social order he desires, and not to be condemned to the role of a honey-tongued deceiver of the people, alternately courted and mocked by the bourgeoisie, he must align himself with the common movement of the workers and professional people who are already fighting Tory reaction? There is no other way.

THE issues to-day are serious. But the way forward is clear. The future lies with the common movement of the working people, forging their unity in the elementary common struggle to-day for the needs and interests and rights of the people against Tory reaction and the big business exploiters, and capable of advancing, as the movement develops, to the wider issues of a change of government, to become the true representatives

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of the interests and freedom of the people against all enemies, and leading the way to the deeper social changes which can alone solve the present crisis. As this struggle unfolds itself, many problems, of policy and tactics, of leadership and organisation, will present themselves in concrete form. Many issues are still uncleared. Controversies and differences on wider issues are inevitable and necessary in the development of the movement. But these controversies and differences need not stand in the way of co-operation in the elementary common tasks of the struggle to-day which all can recognise. All these further issues can be solved in common, once the mass movement of the people begins to advance. To-day the elementary needs are to fight for the livelihood of the people, to place the economic burdens from the shoulders of the poorest on to the shoulders of the rich, to resist the offensive of the trust combines and reaction; to fight for the rights of the people, for the restoration and protection of democratic rights and the rights of working class organisation; to fight for the independence and unity of the working class movement, and the ending of support of the policies of coalition, and for the unity of the working class and democratic movement against Tory reaction and its allies. In these common tasks all who stand on the side of the working class and democracy can play their part.

R. P. D.

Labour Monthly War Pamphlet No. 2

A "NEW ORDER" IN BRITAIN?

***By* R. PALME DUTT**

The lessons of the rise to power of fascism in Europe, the changes in British capitalism and social structure brought about by the war and the resulting crisis of democracy and the working class movement.

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Tom Mann

A Revolutionary Working-Class Fighter

(The Labour Monthly *and its readers pay tribute to the memory of Tom Mann, the greatest working-class fighter of the modern period of the British Labour movement. He stood for all that was best in the movement, all his life he fought to carry forward the banner of the working-class struggle. From the very beginning of the* Labour Monthly, *Tom Mann was an honoured contributor to its pages and a warm friend and helper in the progress of our journal. Among his articles were "From Syndicalism to Communism" in October, 1922, the account of his tour of China in August, 1927, his impressions of South Wales in February, 1931, his report on "Seeing Socialism" after the tenth anniversary of the Soviet Revolution and his reflections on "The Dock Strike of 1889 and After" in September, 1938. Particular interest attaches to the first article mentioned above, which set out in clear terms the basis of his break with the old Syndicalist movement and advance to Communism. He drew the firm conclusion: "The Communist International is the unifying force that must bring together and organise all the militant workers in their right relation so that each can play his part in the common struggle." From that standpoint he never swerved. Below we print the speech delivered at the funeral ceremony by W. Gallacher, M.P., and the tribute of Ben Tillett, his old comrade and companion in arms in the early struggles):*

I.—BY W. GALLACHER, M.P.

Speech at Lawnswood Crematorium, Leeds, March 17, 1941

Friends,

We are gathered here not just to mourn the passing of a comrade who was very dear to us, but also to pay a tribute to one whose long life of service will live forever in the annals of the working class.

True it is that his passing makes our hearts heavy and our thoughts sad. He was so much a part of all of us, so much a part of the great movement to which he had devoted his life.

It was Meredith who said:

> "Lo, strength is of the plain root virtues born
> Strength ye may gain by service
> Prove in scorn, train by endurance
> By devotion shape.
> Strength is not won by miracle or rape."

It was that hard-won strength our Comrade Mann possessed. Strength built upon devoted service to the cause of the working class, it was that strength that carried him through his long and valuable life, never faltering, never turning back, but always pressing forward, however dark the night, towards the dawn of a new and better day.

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Thirty-five years ago I first met him. He had already at that time given a life of service to the movement. He was then a veteran, while I was but in my first days in the movement. I remember it as though it were yesterday. His energy, his earnestness, his wide knowledge of events, the unconquerable spirit that could entertain no doubts about ultimate victory, coupled with a kindly, generous comradeship, made an impression on me that was strengthened with every year of our closer association.

He was an example and an inspiration to workers and working class leaders wherever he went. And he travelled far. In America, Africa, Australia, Spain or China, always he was the spokesman for, and the resolute representative of, the fighting vanguard of the working class. Sixty years ago, with his loyal comrade Ben Tillett, he threw himself body and soul into the great struggle of the dockers and for what was then known as the "New Unionism". He and Ben, with those associated with them, wrote during that time one of the grandest pages of working class history.

Twenty-four years ago, when he was sixty years of age, when after an already long life of ceaseless toil and agitation, he might have desired to slow down, to take it easy, he saw the workers and peasants of Russia take power out of the hands of the capitalists. He saw "the star turn red". He had no doubts, no hesitations in deciding his course. With pride and joy he saw his dreams being realised in one-sixth of the world. With greater energy than ever before he gave himself to the cause. Socialism was triumphant in one-sixth of the globe—the rest of his life was devoted to the end that, sooner or later, it would be triumphant throughout the rest of the world.

He was an ardent trade unionist and he worked incessantly to strengthen the industrial organisation of the working class. He was there in the early days, one of the pioneers of independent working class political activity.

But above all we are proud to proclaim that he was with us in the formation of, and the building of, the Communist Party. To the Party he gave himself without reserve. No task was too humble, no task was too hard, no journey too onerous or exhausting. We never spared him. He never spared himself.

His life was long—but every day of it was the life of a fighter—a fighter against the poverty and injustice that capitalism imposes on so many millions of our people.

It was of such as he that Whitman wrote:

"Not for delectations sweet,
Not the cushion and the slipper,
Not the peaceful and the studious,
Not for us the true enjoyments,
Pioneers, Oh Pioneers.

"Till with the sound of trumpet,
Far, far off the daybreak calls.
Hark, how loud and clear I hear it wind.
Swift, to the head of the Army
Swift, spring to your places,
Pioneers, Oh Pioneers."

Always there at the head of the Army, always ready to spring to his appointed place, that was our Comrade Tom Mann. Our comrade after 84 years of valiant service, after a life that will inspire generations yet

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unborn, has laid him quietly down to rest.

His strength was exhausted in conflict and now, in the midst of the mad storm of Imperialist war, he lies in the deep sleep of eternal peace. But what he was, what he lived for, what he achieved, these will never die. He will march with us in the future as he marched with us in the past—march with us to the culmination of his, and our, hopes and desire, to the end of capitalism, to a free, peaceful and happy life for all. To this cause he gave his full and generous life. There as we take our last sad farewell, we say to him, Goodbye, old comrade, one of the bravest and the best, you gave to the movement all the years of your life, your untiring energy, your great unconquerable spirit. We will try, in the days that lie ahead, to be worthy of the great example you have set us.

II.—BY BEN TILLETT

BYRON SAYS in *Childe Harold* that "Quiet to quick souls is hell . . . his breath is sedition." Quiescence to Tom Mann was torpor, a mental lassitude, stagnation. His vitality of mind like the virility of his body could manifest itself only in action, sweeping action, vivid gesture, the promise of ever widening battle in which his nervous energy and volcanic temper could find expression. Slowness in action appalled and exasperated him. It negatived all his ruthless energy. To me, his uncertainty of aim bordering on the erratic was a tragedy. A fury of emotion sometimes would impel him to blind endeavour to which he would give heroic sacrifice. His life was not merely a strenuous existence, but an intensely strenuous existence, devoted to the good, the bad and indifferent without measure, without the least sordid sense, but given with an abandon, with a paroxysm of energy as startling as his vigour of speech.

Tom Mann's life stream was like a mountain torrent, sweeping from place to place, from crag to crag, from rock to rock, splashing in almost impotent fury, without channel, without course, unharnessed. I am vain enough to believe that the best work of his life was with myself; at least his arduous toil and energies were guided in traces of stern endeavour and of unresting effort. I wished always from the bottom of my heart that he had held on to his plough in the Trade Union furrow, treading his way to the western sunset of life until he met the golden rays of his declining day and had fallen face downwards over the handles of the plough he could so sturdily have guided.

He chose other paths. But whatever he did he won always the love and fellowship of everyone with whom he came into contact. Tom Mann took the message of trade unionism and socialism all over the world. To China, to South Africa, to New Zealand and Australia, to Spain and to the Scandinavian countries. He was the great missionary of internationalism and all who met him during his travels, all who worked with him in the Trade Union and Labour movement generally, will retain always for him the greatest love and affection.

Tom Mann will rank among those big souls in the world of Labour who have toiled for the emancipation of the people from suffering and sorrow.

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The American Scene

BY IVOR MONTAGU

THE HOUR of destiny has struck for the United States Empire. The moment is one which Goebbels, over-estimating its rarity in the present epoch, calls: "one of those rare moments of redivision of the world." Here on the one hand is a numerous people, of a high average level of education and technical skill; enormous resources and a great industrial potential; a huge navy. Here on the other is a world in chaos; frontiers dissolving, empires crumbling. The occasion and the instrument are met. How perfect the one for carving a large chunk out of the other.

Capitalists being what they are, it is not to be imagined that those in control of the instrument would miss this opportunity. Their dreams—and fingers—reach actively out to all the corners of the globe—Europe, the Western Hemisphere, the Pacific.

The basic, typical conflicts of imperialism were never more thoroughly revealed than by a study of these activities. Firstly, the conflict between the empire-builders and the "spectre" they fear above all, viz., the throwing-off of all overlordship by the peoples they desire to subjugate. Second, the conflicts between the empire-builders themselves, the desperate mutual throat-cutting of competing trusts styling themselves Britain, Italy, Germany, Japan, and U.S.A.

In an exceptionally stupid article (*Left Book News*, September, 1940), Strachey argued that the course of present-day Anglo-American co-operation proves that there was some fault in the fundamental importance attached by Marxist analysts of the post-last-war world to the antagonism between the U.S.A. and British Empires. Strachey's trouble is that he is being undialectical. He has forgotten about the negation of the negation. After all the most perfect expression of competition is unification, as when one serpent swallows another. No dialectician could put it more clearly that the American business man himself:

"Whatever the facts about this war may have been or are now, it must be unmistakably clear to any intelligent person that we are engaged in it. Our Government has committed the American community to participation in this war as the economic ally of England, and as her spiritual, if not her political, partner in her struggle with the enemies of the British Empire everywhere in the world, to help prevent, if possible, their destruction of the Empire, and if this should not be possible, to take her place as the heir and residuary legatee or receiver for whatever economic or political assets of the Empire survive her defeat. . . . Whatever the outcome of the war, America has embarked upon a career of imperialism, both in world affairs and in every other aspect of her life, with all the opportunities, responsibilities and perils which that implies. This war inevitably involves a vast revolution in the balance of political and economic power, not only internationally but internally. Even though, by our aid, England should emerge from the struggle without defeat, she will be so impoverished economically and crippled in prestige that it is improbable she will be able to resume or maintain the dominant position in world affairs which she has occupied

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so long. At best England will become a junior partner in a new Anglo-Saxon imperialism, in which the economic resources and the military and naval strength of the United States will be the centre of gravity. Southward in our hemisphere and westward in the Pacific the path of Empire takes its way, and in modern terms of economic power as well as political prestige, the sceptre passes to the United States."*

The Liberal gentlemen of the *New Republic*, and of the *News Chronicle* on this side of the water, very likely visualise this "Anglo-Saxon" (how Hitler must grin to see his pupils of race-theory) Confederation in gentle, cultured terms as a sort of exchange of university lectures and extension of facilities for addressing each other's women's clubs. They forget that capitalism is a system of *exploitation*, a system wherein collaboration on a basis of co-operation cannot exist, wherein conflicts of interest continue to exist even if eyes are politely averted from them, wherein the only collaboration conceivable is on the basis of domination, the basis of the perpetual query: Who will exploit whom?

Why, even President Roosevelt has frankly specified the future relationship:

"For what we send abroad, we shall be repaid within a reasonable time after the close of hostilities in similar materials, or, at our option, in other goods which they can produce and which we need." (January 6, 1941.)

In other words, even in the much-acclaimed speech announcing support for "the democracies," even in the very sentence preceding that which proclaims the "purpose and pledge" to act as "arsenal" for those striving to "maintain a free world" in which "we Americans are vitally concerned," Roosevelt reveals the prospect he holds out for the peoples of the said "democracies" after they have won him that triumph, viz., servitude producing goods not for their own consumption (or for export to the profit of their own capitalists, for that matter), but, "at our option," those which the U.S. Government may designate as "needful."

The two late rivals for the Presidency unite. Roosevelt, in his speech on March 15th, declaring U.S.A. determination to rescue the world from Hitler, says:

"We believe . . . such nations, of no matter what size, can . . . provide material for manufacture and for agriculture."

And Wilkie the following week:

"After the war the capital of the world will be Berlin or Washington. I want it to be Washington."

"Roll on, Mississippi!" The progress to Anglo-American combination may develop as irresistibly, but is it to be wondered that, while collaborating, the partners struggle frantically that each, rather than the other, may hold as great a number of bargaining assets as possible when the time comes to strike a balance and draw up the deed of partnership? Aiding the Empire, the United States is busy substituting its own strategic and

*Dr. Virgil Jordan, president of the National Industrial Conference Board, address to the annual convention of the Investment Bankers' Association of America, at Hollywood, Florida, December 10, 1940.

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economic power everywhere in place of British. Receiving aid, with glowing thanks upon its every spokesman's lips, the Empire is busy clinging desperately, until levered off, to every remaining vantage point.

The obvious points for Anglo-American collaboration, that is those where present strategical considerations demand that the U.S.A. should strengthen the British position, are in Europe and the Far East. The present military conflict between Britain and Germany, so long as it will be continued and so long as the British navy remains intact and outside German control, prevents German competition from exerting any military pressure against the American Empire. Similarly, in the Pacific, as Matsuoka phrased it (January 29, 1941), the U.S.A. regards China, Malay, Australia and New Zealand as its first line of defence.

It is in the "Western Hemisphere" that the collaboration is replaced by sharp and open opposition. Advantage is taken of the naval needs of the British to lease military bases in Newfoundland and on the islands of the Gulf. Greenland is taken under protection. The neutrality provisions ban the commerce of U.S.A. vessels in the war zones, and hence oblige the British to withdraw vessels from their world trading fleet for the vital Atlantic route. Hence also they enable the U.S.A. maritime marine to advance to monopoly of South American costal trading and even of the Pacific routes to the Antipodes and Asia.

The U.S.A. erects a vast safe deposit in which to "protect" the assets of the American continent from rivals. "Pan-America" takes shape at the Havana Conference. Tactless senators openly call for the extension of the Monroe Doctrine to Canada and to Australia and New Zealand as well. The Roosevelt Administration invites Canada to exchange its own Ministers with Argentine, Brazil, Chili and Mexico.

The British in their turn cling desperately to their assets in industrial stocks on the U.S.A. continent. U.S.A. interests demand their sale at bargain price as a condition of subsequent assistance under the Lend-Lease Bill. The same U.S.A. interests demand a further condition, the cession to Wall Street of British interests in rubber and tin, the abandonment of the key monopoly card in the British pack. Already the British-Bolivian tin monopoly has been obliged to allow half the Bolivian tin output to go to smelters to be newly erected in U.S.A. Already Viscose, the biggest Rayon firm in U.S.A., has been sold by the British Government over Courtauld's head. (The sniff of what Courtauld's are likely to get out of the Government in return for their consent sent all stocks in British-owned firms soaring the next day.)

The trade of the entire continent (apart from the U.S.A.) reels under the impact of the war. (Brazil: 1940 exports down 41 million dollars, imports down 10 million, compared with 1939). The Hitler occupation of Europe and the British blockade deprive the South American states, all raw material producers and very large producers of consumption goods, of their export markets. Gigantic stocks accumulate. Despite British frantic efforts to maintain manufacture of exports and replace their late or current allies (expansion of toy industry, patriot "Glamour Girls" with just-as-good-as-Paris frocks for Buenos Ayres); the U.S.A. steadily replaces with manu-

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factures all the industrial goods from Central Europe.

U.S.A. trade returns show the largest export figures since 1929: 1939—3,177 million dollars; 1940—4,022 millions, the increase going chiefly to Britain and South America. Imports are up 307 millions (chiefly war materials; rubber, tin, metal, silk, iron alloys). Only the agricultural exports share the general continental disaster; from the U.S.A. the figure is the lowest since 1869.

The customers, penniless because they cannot sell their own exports, can afford to buy from no one. Emissaries from Germany, Japan, Britain, U.S.A., scour every city in South America. In the last six months there have been special trade delegations of each complexion there; most are there still; another speciality is "cultural contacts" with budgetary appropriations for bribing the intelligentsia. Germany finds difficulty in delivery; the U.S.A. outbids Britain everywhere with loans to the prospective customers to buy from her. Britain, asking loan of war material on plea of poverty in the northern half of the continent, counters by paying cash for the whole Sao Paulo cotton crop of 450 million kilos plus last year's surplus.

One fantastic by-product of the sharpness of the struggle between these two countries who collaborate against Germany in Europe and against Japan in the Far East is the readiness of the U.S.A. to collaborate with openly pro-Nazi forces (such as President Vargas in Brazil) wherever these will temporarily play ball, and of the British to use the Japanese to supplement them in keeping the U.S.A. out of a market they cannot completely fill themselves.

Thus Argentine and Uruguay, where British trade influence was strong enough to prevent any trade agreement with U.S.A. right up until two months ago, last summer signed a trade agreement extending preference to an immense list of articles of Japanese manufacture that Britain at present finds it inconvenient to supply. Last winter the Americans triumphed, and Argentine accepted at last a U.S.A. loan. But already this has had a further unexpected result.

Of all South American countries the Argentine, as a result of playing off British against dollar capitalism, has most developed a native industry and native bourgeoisie, enjoying a precarious balancing "independence," or at least lack of complete dependence on the "good neighbour" in the north. At Havana, for example, the Argentine bourgeoisie invariably led the opposition to the Pan-American proposals, the effect of which would always have been virtual monopoly for U.S.A. Here their interests coincided with those of their other backers, Britain. Now, no sooner have they the U.S. loan in their pockets than, to the consternation of U.S. and British interests alike, they convene at Montevideo (February, 1941) a conference of the "River Plate countries"—Argentine, Brazil, Uruguay, Bolivia, Paraguay—and propose the revision of all most-favoured-nation treaties of these states, a pooling of agricultural surpluses, and a customs union, as a "step toward self-sufficiency."

This was too much for the others to stomach, for it would have made the raw material ones subordinate in external trade, to the advantage solely of Argentine and Uruguay. Bolivia and Paraguay have, however, agreed

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to the necessary revisions to give preference to agricultural machinery from firms situated within the other three; they receive from the other three free zones and duty-free transport for all goods but arms; further, Argentine loans to Paraguay to stabilise Paraguayan currency, Argentine loans to Bolivia to build a railroad running from Bolivia across Northern Argentine, and all three set up a convention to regulate transport on the River Paraguay.

In other words, a local bourgeoisie takes advantage of the autarchy fashion to horn in on tin and oil country hitherto considered the direct preserve of Britain and U.S.A., and so put up their "squarable" figure against both! "A blow to U.S.A.-British trade," says the *New York Times* of February 13. This is not the only sign of the kind on the other side of the continent. Peru and Chili have been talking trade turkey and even discussing Pacific defence on their own "without granting the U.S.A. defence bases."

One of the most important objects of U.S.A. capital in the Pan-American scheme is the cornering of the enormous accumulated surpluses. (At Montevideo, Argentine tried to get Bolivia and Paraguay to agree to market their surpluses only through Argentine, but didn't quite bring it off.) On the one hand, with Europe impoverished after the war, and the stocks fantastically huge (Wallace says U.S.A. agricultural surpluses cannot be disposed of for years, even after the war), the prices will drop to nothing unless there is a corner. In this connection, Havana even invited Australia and New Zealand to estimate their surpluses and come into the pool.

Secondly, food after and even during the war is an important political weapon, and the U.S.A.—with the experience of Hoover on the value of food for beating revolution made clear from the last war—cannot afford a situation in which it is acting as good Samaritan to some post-war European rebel ("Starving? O.K. Change your Government back to 'order' and you may eat"), and some tuppenny-halfpenny little South American pretending to be independent comes along and spoils the game by selling its surplus to the rebel. That would never do. All must be pooled and tied.

This food weapon, by the way, is already being used by the U.S.A. in the course of the war. It must not be thought, by any means, that even in those regions where the U.S.A.-British action runs most parallel, in Europe and the Far East, the U.S.A. does not pursue its own independent policy. It acquires vested interests in India, leads in the organisation and control of the Dutch East Indies defence (American agencies have for months been giving details); it has accumulated its own improved collection of aristocratic ragbag and title-deeds ready for after the war (Otto Hapsburg and the Queen of Holland are star turns, and there is also a probably slightly superior selection of French exiles), and Colonel Donovan visiting Beyrouth, Jerusalem, Cairo, Athens, Bagdad, Sofia, Belgrade, Ankara, Dublin and Lisbon has certainly not confined himself to collecting luggage labels.

In mid-January, on the day succeeding Roosevelt's aid pledge, the U.S.A. State Department announced that British capitalism had come tamely to heel, Churchill had yielded to Roosevelt a part anyway of what

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he had denied Hoover. "A triumph of vitamin diplomacy," Columbia Radio called it, recalling the big political role played by U.S.A. relief during and after the last war. The British Government consented to raise the blockade in respect to shiploads of food and vitamins for—where? Spain, unoccupied France and Finland (used for transit by a German expeditionary force just like Hungary or Rumania). Since then, under threat by Darlan, the man so much admired by Leahy, U.S.A. Ambassador to the Vichy Government, as well as pressure from Washington, further U.S.A. food cargoes are starting for France, Churchill's anathema of the plan forgotten by the British colander blockaders. Argentine has sent food to Spain with B.B.C. emphasis of London approval and Hoare has met Donovan and Nicolas Franco in Lisbon to discuss the sending of supplies to a Government that the Wilhelmstrasse says is only refraining from joining the war because it has not yet accumulated enough to do so.

Note the choices of the regimes Roosevelt selects to make his dependent agents—Franco, Pétain and Mannerheim. Forward the "Truth and Love" boys to tell us again how American democracy is a force for European revolution!

By far the most humorous episode to date in the "European Revolution" business is the fact that Sir Walter Citrine, in the course of enlisting the support of the American Federation of Labour, put over the "People's War" stunt so eloquently that rich Americans got into a panic and said: "What is the use of helping Britain to victory, she's going Socialist anyway?" Citrine had hastily to complete his tour with a special emphasis on the "solid and constitutional" quality of British Labour. Even so, the *Sunday Times* U.S. correspondent welcomed the Willkie visit to London, because, he said, it would enable a man who carried weight with Wall Street to see for himself that there was no chance of Britain becoming Socialist! ("If Bevin is a Socialist, I'm a Communist," is said to have been Willkie's verdict when the tour was over.)

Dependence has even been emphasised symbolically with the transference of the British Foreign Secretary and Foreign Office to Washington and the appointment of an office boy in charge of the provincial branch in London.

Bases are established and enlarged in Guam, Samoa, the Philippines, Hawaii, presumably to guard against the Japanese imperialists, though these could clearly be toppled over by a trade boycott in a few months did U.S.A. capital not fear the force that would then topple it—a Chinese victory and a Japanese popular revolt. But the bases encircling America, planned on the Pacific coast islands (Galapagos for instance), on the Mexican coast, etc.—these are for defence—against whom? Roosevelt says hysterically: "From the fjords of Greenland it is only six hours by air to New England," "the Azores are only 2,000 miles from parts of our eastern seaboard." The statement made by the Senate Naval Committee the day previously was more exact:

"We cannot be attacked directly by the armed forces of any powerful foreign nation. We cannot be blockaded by any surface vessels or submarines. We cannot be starved. We cannot be invaded. Nor can our cities or homes be bombed from the air by foreign airplanes, if we make sure that we command the sea and air approaches."

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Cordell Hull, before the House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs Committee, said (January 15):

"The question is whether, in face of a universally recognised movement to invade and conquer, peaceful nations shall wait until the invader crosses their boundary lines. Or whether they shall recognise that this is a world movement of conquest, and invoke the law of self-defence before it is too late. That is the question. We can take our choice."

The bases which Hull is here proposing to occupy are, most of them, thousands of miles from the nearest U.S.A. borders; the "invader" he is referring to is distant thousands of miles away. And this gentleman is one of those who raised an outcry when Molotov, whose country has *frontiers, extending over several thousand miles, contiguous with the same "invader,"* proposed to join defence of bases to *a country whose border was within gunshot of the second largest Soviet city.*

What kind of "defence"—for a country geographically situated as is the U.S.A.—is the purpose of an army on war footing of 4,000,000 men, as envisaged in the Defence Appropriation passed by the House of Representatives on March 20, 1941?

Dollar imperialism, the destruction of popular governments by U.S.A. capital, using corruption as a first weapon, military force if this is withstood, is an ever-present factor throughout the protected "Western Hemisphere," the predominant cause of its "backwardness." It is not a thing of the past. Only this January the three revolting generals, of army, navy, and police, forestalled by Popular Front President Batista in Cuba, flew to receive asylum—where? In New Orleans. Was it not following the visit of one of their leaders to Washington that the "Socialists" encouraged the Chilian Senate to make a bid to ban the Communist Party? The manœuvre was prevented by the refusal of the President to sign the ban; now, against the "Socialists," the remainder of the Popular Front (Radicals, Trade Unions, and Communists) have won a great electoral victory. The fight is sharpened in Mexico, always in the van of popular struggle on the American continent.

From whom was Almazan—reactionary candidate in the Presidential elections—financed? Who armed his bands of Fascist thugs? From what territory did he wage his campaign? When U.S.A. capital found the popular support for him so infinitesimal that promotion of a putsch for him would be ludicrous, it changed its tactics and used his nuisance value to do a deal with President-elect Camacho. We throw over Almazan, you take over his programme. Hand over bases, let the oil kings back. (Camacho introduced on January 15, a bill to enable this to be done.)

In Britain we are acquainted with the principle of profit out of national need. The grossest racketeer in Britain is but a small-timer in the eyes of his American counterpart. Ninety per cent of ten billion dollars of defence orders have gone to 600 big contractors, although 200,000 contractors are eligible and 25 per cent of U.S. machine tool resources are estimated as idle or working less than eight hours per day. (Congress Committee evidence.)

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Here are eloquent figures.* The aircraft carrier *Enterprise*, begun in 1933, and the *Hornet*, begun in 1939, both displace 19,900 tons, have designed speed of 34 knots, generate 120,000 horse-power, have capacity 83 planes, and carry eight 5-inch guns. The contractors are charging $31,800,000 for the *Hornet*; they charged $19,000,000 for the *Enterprise*. Carriers laid down in 1940, with no innovations, for the sake of speed in delivery, are each to cost $47,000,000. *Benson* class destroyers, begun 1939, and *Mahan* class, begun 1933, have the same designed speed, 36½ knots, the same number of torpedo tubes; the former have one more 5-inch gun and generate 44,000 compared with 42,800 horse-power. The cost per ton, however, has risen from $2,180 for the latter to $3,100 for the former. In the case of light cruisers ordered in 1933 and others ordered in 1940, of identical tonnage, horse-power, speed and fire power, cost per ton has risen from $1,182 to $2,162. Is the explanation more elaborate controls? An investigating sub-committee of the House of Representatives was told "fire-control equipment cost has been holding about the same since 1926." What about labour costs? Have they risen between 1933 and 1940? Yes, 34 per cent (calculated from the Bureau of Labour statistics figures for the shipbuilding industry). But the cost increase per ton has been in the same period 90 per cent.

Six virtually identical 35,000-ton battleships are now being constructed, three at government yards and three at private shipbuilding yards. The average cost of hull and machinery per ship in the government yards is $41,237,000; in the private yards $61,391,000.

Plus armour, armament and ammunition, one of these privately built vessels is to cost $88,997,000. A 45,000-ton battleship building in government yards (where wage rates average higher than in private yards) is to cost, equally complete, $83,000,000. A House of Representatives Committee is told: "This appears to be reasonable and about what should be expected." We are scarcely surprised to learn that "the navy has never examined the underlying costs or profits of the private builders. . . . It makes no pretence of doing this . . . has no staff for it." (Nye Committee Report, 1936; still true.)

The Roosevelt Administration has just announced thousands of millions of dollars of new naval expenditure. Of 115 new destroyers, government yards are to build 17; of 43 submarines they are to build 8; of 8 aircraft carriers and 27 cruisers they are to build none. These orders repeal a hitherto existing law that of all naval orders one-half were to go to government yards.

Perhaps the private yards had space to deal with orders that the government yards had not? On the contrary, just *prior* to the order, the New York Shipbuilding Company, for example, reported unfulfilled orders adequate to keep its existing yards operating at capacity for eleven years. Accordingly the Navy Department has awarded a subsidy of $26,000,000 in addition to the price to the private firms to help increase their yard facilities.

On February 15 a director of the American Shipbuilding Company was appointed the new Assistant Secretary to the Navy. New naval estimates,

* From the "New Republic," January 6, 1941.

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the press notes that week, were passed with "unusual rapidity."

Senator McNary reported that his letter-bag ran 5 to 1 against the Lend-Lease Bill and that this was true of astonishingly many Senators. This despite a propaganda barrage compared to which even the liberty drive in the States in the last war became a pale memory. (In Hollywood, they say, the classic theme of movies has been changed to "Boy meets Gun," and you haven't a chance of getting your script passed by the Hay's organisation unless it mentions Argentine at least six times.) Before it was passed the latest Gallup figures showed actually a hardening of the feeling against the Bill. (Whereupon it was hastily passed.) What chance, within the electoral forms, has the common man of deciding policy in the greatest bourgeois democracy of the world?

The recent presidential election has shattered the illusions of many Liberals. The two parties entered into a conspiracy, says Theodore Dreiser, to make absolutely identical statements on foreign policy, identical promises about keeping America out of war, in order to prevent the electorate from expressing any choice. (As for the atmosphere for the minority parties, it is sufficient to record that in one town in Pennsylvania 24 years of prison sentences, with 12 more trials still in progress, have been awarded simply for nominating Browder for President, Ford for Vice-President, and an International Brigadier for Governor.)

To-day, what? "By the decision of others we are losing our freedom of operation, our freedom of choice, our ability to control our own future." (*New York Post*, February 15.)

The latest Gallup poll shows 83 per cent for "keeping out." Yet those who asked for votes to keep America out of war, and spoke of "aid to Britain, but short of war," now say cheerfully: "Whether you like it or not, you are in the war."

The President's "Lend-Lease" Bill places in his hands alone powers to "promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary and proper to carry out the proposals of this Act," "notwithstanding the provisions of any other law." It enables the President alone to decide which wars and which governments to support with arms. It enables the President to select as such wars what may in reality be the Fascist crushing of popular revolt.

The assault on the opposition in U.S.A. is now in full swing. Roosevelt's March 15th speech gave the signal. "The decisions of our Democracy may be slowly arrived at, but when that decision is made . . . it is binding on us all." "Sacrifices," "many inconveniences," "working longer at your bench," he prophesied. The cheers of his fellow banqueteers never rang louder than at the declaration that "America's determination . . . must not be obstructed by unnecessary strikes of workers."

Regimentation, Vigilantes, Ku Klux Klan, the segregation of conscripted men on account of race, just as in Germany—negroes in U.S.A., Jews in Naziland; this is where the New Deal and the Fight for Freedom have

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already led.* *The War to End War* gives place to the *Fascism to outstrip all Fascism.*

Millions in America who sympathise with the British people and with the peoples over-run by Hitler see their sympathy made use of by capitalist interests to profit from British armaments, to establish a dictatorship and to drag their country into war.

Other millions see their wider sympathies for *all* who are suffering exploited by that more timid section of American capital that would end the war by an appeasement peace and try to share the world with Adolf Hitler rather than with a dependent British Empire.

The masses of the people, instinct with the desire to defend America, sees this passionate patriotism exploited by rackets, used as pretext for measures of Fascism at home and of advance toward conquest and the bolstering of reaction abroad.

Let us, finally, return to Dr. Jordan to see how he deals with the problem:

"In peace time it is the accepted custom and normal manners of modern government to conceal all important facts from the public, or to lie about them; in war it is a political vice which becomes a public necessity. People in every country, including our own, have more or less reconciled themselves to being pushed around by their public employees and treated as though they were helpless wards or incompetent inmates of some vast institution for the indigent and feeble-minded. It is much in this spirit and atmosphere that the chatter and prattle about our national defence programme proceeds in this country to-day . . .

"We may be afraid of the unfamiliar and forbidding word imperialism in connection with the commitment we have made. We may prefer, in the current American fashion, to disguise it in a vague phrase like 'hemisphere defence.' But, consciously or unaware . . .we have no alternative, in truth, than to move along the road we have been travelling in the past quarter-century, in the direction we took with the conquest of Cuba and the Philippines and our participation in the last World War."

But awakening is coming in America, already in the schools, in the giant enterprises, and among the ruined agriculturists it stirs with a vigour of which the British press gives the reader no conception. The factory workers are resisting compulsory arbitration. The youth, denied a hearing at the "Lend-Lease" sessions, raises its voice; it will not be silenced. The realisation grows that in this century the traditional devotion to freedom and democracy of the U.S.A., its desire to aid toward these the rest of humanity, is doomed to be frustrated and perverted wherever there is alliance with the ruling class, and can come to fruition only in relentless struggle *against* the ruling classes, and together with the working classes of all the world. The America of Big Business has yet to reckon with the America of Tom Hayward, John Reed, Eugene Dobs and Earl Browder.

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*Sentences of ten years imprisonment each have been inflicted on two young men for running a Progressive Book Shop in Oklahama. Browder has been given four years on a trumped up charge. The "New Republic" is among the papers banned in Army Camps.

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British Monopoly Capital and the War

BY MARGARET HUDSON

THE "LYTTELTON PLAN" for concentrating production in the non-war industries, named after the new President of the Board of Trade, is the latest and most publicised example of the process of growing concentration and monopoly which has been going on with increasing speed since the war. It is admitted that this new concentration is not merely a temporary war-time measure. Thus the *Financial News* (12.3.40) comments:

"The last war changed a predominantly competitive industrial structure in Britain to one in which cartels and monopolies were of great importance. In the period between the two wars (and especially after 1932) the influence of these cartels and monopolies extended fast, so that at the outbreak of the present war the structure was fairly evenly balanced between competition and association. And now the development of monopoly is pressing ahead so fast that by the end of the war it looks as though the structure is going to be predominantly monopolist."

The dangers of this development are apparent even to the capitalist writer. He continues:

"The result of present trends may well be to establish forms of organisation in these industries far removed from the public interest. . . . There will be serious danger of extreme ossification of the industrial structure, lack of enterprise and initiative, and a general tendency to restrict production in order to maintain the level of profit per unit of production. . . . *Our major post war industrial problem will be to devise forms of Governmental control to prevent this corporative and fundamentally backward system from developing.*" [Our italics. "Corporative" is, of course, a polite word for Fascist.]

The present war confronts the British capitalist class with far more acute economic problems than did the last. Confronted with a more highly organised and extensive German Imperialism than in the last war, without a French ally to provide and feed millions of soldiers, confronted with a far more technically advanced and politically experienced Yankee Imperialism, the British monopolists seek the way out by squeezing the workers and the smaller capitalists, by reducing non-war imports and cutting consumption to the bone, by concentrating a larger share of profits in their own hands, by monopolising and trustifying industry, by setting their house in order for tougher fights after the war. The war gives them unrivalled opportunities for this.

The present Government and State machine represents, not just British capitalism in general, but those monopolist, restrictive groups in particular who have organised the drive towards concentration of production and power in recent years. The Ministry as re-organised in October 1940 has closer direct links with big business than any which have preceded it. The "new drive" behind Churchill turns out to be the old "rationalising" drive of the banks.

Key controller of war industry is *Sir Andrew Duncan*, former Bank of England Director and executive head of the British Iron and Steel Federation, which includes, of course, the biggest armament firms and

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which in the pre-war years was built up with the aid of the banks into "one of the tightest and most restrictive monopolies this country has ever known." (*Economist,* October 5, 1940.)

The new President of the Board of Trade, in charge of developments in the non-war industries, is *Captain Oliver Lyttelton,* brought in presumably as a specialist in restricting tin production and organising monopoly (he had been chairman of the London Tin Corporation and the British Metal Corporation). At the beginning of the war he became Non-ferrous Metal Controller and his company (The British Metal Corporation) was paid a fee of £220,000 a year (its pre-war profit) for running the control (in addition it was allowed to continue its profit-making operations abroad).

With Government controls in the grip of the representatives of the monopolies, it is easy to see how "every State intervention into industry means a shift in the division of income" (Varga). The biggest firms, which were "in on" the controls, were able to learn their competitors' trade secrets and discipline them on the one hand: on the other, they were able to extract high profits from their customers (by fixing monopoly prices for their goods). As early as December 9, 1939, the *Economist* wrote:

"With a few exceptions, each controller has been selected from the trade he controls. . . . In some industries the moving spirit in one of the competing firms (often the largest in the industry) is being put into a position where he can hardly help learning his competitors' trade secrets. Apart from this inequity within the controlled industry, the system is unfair as between the industry and the community, more especially the industry and its customers. There is no need to assume any deliberate partiality; unquestionably all the controllers are deeply anxious to serve the public interest. But they have an unavoidable bias towards seeing things through the spectacles of the interest from which they come. There are a large number of instances where the controller's power has been used to enforce changes in prices or in trade practice (such as terms of contract, etc.) which, whether or not that was their purpose in the controller's mind, have undoubtedly had the effect of benefiting the section of the industry from which he comes at the expense of its customers."

Monopoly has not merely maintained its position in the war but has immensely extended its hold. Firstly, investment in productive industry is denied to all except those who have official permission. It is physically impossible to get plant, building materials, etc., except by official permission. Investment is thus almost entirely restricted to the monopoly-controlled war industries (which are thus safeguarded even in case of inflation, since they can invest their profits in "real" assets).

Orders come out from the Ministries to the biggest firms. Smaller firms can only get orders through the big firms, and thus at best come to occupy a more and more dependant position, perhaps manufacturing special lines in components for the big firm, but losing their own general trade. At worst they fail to get war orders at all, and find their supplies of raw material and labour correspondingly restricted.

So far the *growth* of monopoly since the war has been most obvious in the "non-essential" trades, i.e., in just those industries where the monopoly drive has been least successful in the pre-war years. Under the "Lyttelton plan" only "nucleus" firms will be allowed to continue production in the consumers' goods industries; the remainder are to be closed down for the duration. The industries immediately affected employ some two million

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workers and include textiles, hosiery, boots and shoes, cutlery and leather goods. It is estimated that about 500,000 workers—possibly 750,000—will lose their present employment and be available for transfer to war work.

The capitalist press does not seriously attempt to disguise the fact that the concentration means increasing permanent trustification of the industries, and is far more than a wartime measure. As the City Editor of the *News Chronicle* put it, "the eggs cannot be unscrambled after the war."

It is generally agreed, too, that the main "nucleus" firms will certainly be those already associated with the banks and the monopoly drive. Thus the *Economist* (March 15, 1941) points out that as far as cotton is concerned, the Lancashire Cotton Corporation "has already established itself as a nucleus firm par excellence", and the investor with shares in the big combines "can even reflect on the ultimate benefits which elimination of the smaller firms would bring." For the big men in these industries, limitation of supply will have been well worth while if it gives them the monopoly status they have been seeking for years. Indeed, the big distributive interests, led by Lewis' (Lord Woolton's firm), are now asking for concentration measures to be applied in their trade.

These new measures are already causing grave anxiety among those workers who will be first affected. Whatever may be said about "reinstatement after the war", the workers' experience tells them that the monopolists have no intention of allowing the works they close now to re-open after the war. The whole policy of the Lancashire Cotton Corporation and the Spindles Board has been to scrap cotton-spinning machinery. Is it any wonder, with this experience behind them, if Lancashire people take promises about "post-war re-opening" with a pinch of salt?

Just as the smaller units in productive industry are going, the smaller financial businesses are being squeezed out too (one bank, Goschen & Cunliffe, has already succumbed). The Stock Exchange and purely stock-broking and merchant firms have far less business to handle, and as monopoly develops their function too is slipping from them.

Thus more and more profits are concentrated in the hands of leading groups. More and more power is going to the biggest banking and finance interests; to the direct war monopolies (steel, arms, motor and aircraft); to those supplying war materials (nickel, copper, tin, rubber, chemicals); and to a lesser extent, to the associated monopolies in consumer goods (cotton, rayon, sugar, fats—Lancashire Cotton, Courtaulds, Tate & Lyle, Unilever).

The published profits,* which show a modest increase (9%) before tax, and a modest decrease (4%) after tax and depreciation, are quite consistent with the major trends perceived. The monopolies are certainly making more profits than before the war, but they are more adept at hiding them. For example, Douglas Jay, City Editor of the *Herald*, recently calculated that the Clearing Banks *must* have made increased profits of £5,000,000 through creating credit for the Government; but, as he prophesied, none of this appeared in their accounts. For the trusts, published profits bear little relation to actual profits.

It would be a mistake to underestimate the enormous difficulties en-

**Economist* sample of 2,260 companies reporting in 1940.

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countered by the dominant monopoly group in "organising" British industry. The proportion of old, small-scale plant and obsolete production methods is so enormous in cotton and wool, for example, the "middlemen" and shopkeepers are so numerous, that immense *political* risks attend any effort to get rid of them. The task can at least be attempted in wartime with some show of confidence, because small businessmen may accept out of patriotism sacrifices which in peacetime would be clearly seen to benefit competitors and no one else.

The development of monopoly will not solve the economic problems of the British capitalist class either in war or peace, but must make them more acute than ever in the long run. The development of powerful monopolies in the lighter industries, which are beginning to break into the charmed circle round the Bank of England and the Goverment, will mean a growing scramble between them and the heavy industry for monopoly profits, with the advantage on the side of heavy industry.

The consumers' monopolies (notably tobacco, rayon, margarine, soap, flour, meat and sugar) have always been relatively much more powerful in Britain than, for example, in Germany (largely because the parasitic wealth of Britain, derived from imperialist super-profit, gives them a bigger market, and also because they share directly in the exploitation of cheap colonial raw materials). Their drive to maintain their profits is likely to come into conflict sooner or later with the drive of heavy industry to cut the cost of the workers' subsistence.

As monopoly extends, "redundancy" extends also; the number of unemployed rises, the market diminishes. For the present, in wartime, this is the great advantage to the capitalist class of speeding up the growth of monopoly, since it gives them at once a bigger army and an industrial reserve army, and reduces their need to buy from America. But in the long run it must mean more acute crisis. Moreover, the great disadvantage of monopoly capitalist control in wartime is that it is in many ways even more inefficient, more wasteful of productive forces than smaller-scale capitalism.

The *Economist* (March 8, 1941) declares: "The vista of restriction of monopoly profits, of the discouragement of enterprise and the support of inefficiency thus opened up is frightening in the extreme." Similarly the *Financial News* looks forward to a position where "the large units dominate the industries" and "the restriction of output to maintain profit per unit of output" becomes more and more general. It begins to look as though Mr. Arthur Greenwood's estimate of seven million unemployed after the war is quite a sober one. The position of British capitalism is becoming more and more difficult; the material basis for manœuvres and concessions to the workers is fast disappearing.

The T.U.C. is, however, throwing its weight behind the plans for concentration of industry and transfer of workers, though the union leaders cannot help knowing that for many of these workers there will be no jobs in their own industry to go back to after the war. This growth of "rationalisation" and monopoly is not supported by the leaders solely

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because the war requires it—any more than the big firms support it wholly for that reason. "Rationalisation" and monopoly is itself part of the reformist programme of peaceful socialism.

Support for monopoly capital in its rationalisation and concentration drive has long been the policy of the dominant T.U.C. leadership, which prefers dealing with the *monopolist* employers, the big-business men, the capitalists with super-profits to spend, as opposed to the small. This line runs right back to the fight of the present leadership after the General Strike to establish "Mondism," or collaboration with monopoly, as the official policy of the Labour movement. Bevin took his stand clearly at the 1928 T.U.C.

"I do welcome nationalisation. I make no apology for so doing. This hybrid state of the small employee and the combine fighting each other over a long period . . . is causing penury and trouble among the whole of our people. I would rather see a real organised attempt by nationalisation than I would see a long-drawn weary road from the small employer to the big."

Firms which make high profits can pay their workers better wages (so runs the argument); therefore let us ensure high profits. But only monopoly can ensure high profits under modern conditions; therefore let us assist monopoly. The collapse of American "Fordism" into the worst crisis in history, the fascist development of monopoly in Germany, the creation of distressed areas in England, the growth of heavy unemployment which lowered wage standards in every capitalist country, these economic facts of the last twenty years have still taught the Labour leaders nothing about the real consequences of monopoly capitalism for the working class.

They still believe, or effect to believe, that "after the war" monopoly will lead to "planning", to "social security" and not to the familiar tale of poverty in the midst of plenty, international rivalries and new wars, and, above all, to the development in Britain of Fascist methods, of the open dictatorship of a highly organised and unified big capitalist class.

The development of concentration and monopoly is ranging the workers in large-scale organisation against capitalism united on an all-Britain scale, backed by the State. To tackle the employers without tackling the State is becoming impossible. In this situation the trade union leaders are trying to find a place for trade unions as "conciliators" in a corporate State. For Bevin, factory managers "are like trade union officials, something to love and something to swear at"; they are "your allies in the new methods" of industrial control. But the class struggle, intensified by monopoly, cannot be abolished by a phrase.

There can be no return to the old forms of capitalism, the palmy days of the British ruling class, which fostered the faith of reformists in the saving power of big business. To-day the acute difficulties of the monopolists are driving them to adopt more and more openly the fascist, dictatorial technique of Government by repression. There can be only one alternative—the fight of the workers for a People's Government which will take over the banks and the key industries and run them in the interests of the people.

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Socialist Prosperity in the U.S.S.R.

BY R. PAGE ARNOT

THE PEOPLE of Britain are suffering from a double blockade, both of body and mind. Imports are restricted, cargoes are sunk, families are rationed and rations are shortened. At the same time no news is imported beyond what is considered necessary for the Government's war purposes. Information about other countries is, as it were, strictly rationed. The population of Britain are being taught to go without, and this induced blockade mentality is being extended to things of the spirit.

But realities cannot be thus conjured away. Not only do other countries such as India exist—and in a manner very different from that rationed out in "the news"—but the reality of the one Socialist country is of the utmost importance to the peoples of all other countries. Whoever looks upon the U.S.S.R. only as a news item in the Foreign Affairs of British Imperialism is losing grasp of reality.

When in August 1914 the leaders of the Labour and Socialist parties of Europe forsook the Socialist standpoint, the joy of the ruling class was well expressed by the *Times*, which spoke of the haunting fear of class-war as a *nightmare* now dispelled in the rosy dawn of national unity. One part alone of that old International carried out to the end the policy of Socialism—the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. It overthrew the classmen of the capitalists, defeated the forces of intervention, built up the U.S.S.R. as a Socialist State of workers and peasants. The leaders of the other Labour and Socialist parties of Western Europe by their betrayal of Socialism bear responsibility for the continuance of capitalism with its crises and wars. This is the first significance of the U.S.S.R., that it is the triumph of the one revolutionary Socialist party that remained true to Socialism, true to the teachings of Marx.

With the third Five Year Plan, begun in 1938, the U.S.S.R. entered a new period of development, "the era of the completion of the building of classless, socialist society, and of the gradual transition from Socialism to Communism." All that was bad or backward in the heritage of the past was now to be overcome. Accordingly in the resolution of the 18th Party Congress held March, 1939, it was said:

> "Now we can and must squarely face and carry out in actual practice the fundamental economic task of the U.S.S.R.: *to overtake and surpass the most advanced capitalist countries of Europe and also the U.S.A., economically as well.*"

For although two years ago industry in the U.S.S.R. had made a *ninefold* increase in the quarter century since the level of before the last war (while most of the big capitalist countries had not come near doubling that level) the previous extreme backwardness of the Tsarist regime meant that *economically*, measured in production per head of the population, the U.S.S.S.R., had

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still to outstrip the U.S.A., the United Kingdom, Germany, etc. This, then, was the economic goal set two years ago at the 18th Party Congress; and in many fundamental branches of industry (e.g. in steel, coal and electric power, when the country was still three to four times in arrears of the U.S.A.) it demanded a long-term programme. To obtain not only a sufficiency but an abundance of all products is the condition for attaining to the second or higher phase of Communism. Thus the era of transition to Communism which has already begun is to be reckoned not as a matter of two or three years but as a considerably longer period.

On the occasion of the Eighteenth Conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, held at the end of February, 1941, when the economic results of 1940 and the plan of development of the national economy for this year were considered, together with tasks of the party organisations in industry and transport, steps were also taken to realise this further goal. The State Planning Commission was charged to elaborate a general economic plan for the U.S.S.R. in order to solve the task of outstripping the chief capitalist countries in production per head, not only of articles of consumption but of means of production, especially pig-iron and steel, fuel and electric power and machinery.

Such planning is impossible in capitalist countries. But a new generation born since the Revolution, growing up as conscious builders of Socialism, can envisage, tackle and carry through this gigantic Fifteen-Year-Plan and bequeath to their children the abundance of goods that makes possible the way of life and developed human culture of Communist society.

The experiences of the present third Five-Year-Plan give the basis for these further prospects. The output of socialist industry in these last three years has risen by 44%. The creation of reserves of grain and other products and of skilled labour has gone ahead, together with huge capital investments (108 milliard roubles in three years, being nearly as great as the total of the five years of the Second Five-Year-Plan) while the necessary defence measures have been taken to maintain preparedness. The Conference approved for 1941 an increase in capitalist investment of over 50% beyond that of 1940, of which investment in industry alone will show an increase of 71%. The number of workers and office employees (27,000,000 in 1937, 30.4 millions in 1940) will rise to 31.6 millions in 1941; and of these new workers over three quarters of a million will come trained and skilled from the new vocational schools set up in 1940. Apart from increase in material income, the raising of the cultural level is shown by the increased budget expenditure on social and educational work (from thirty-five milliard roubles in 1938 to nearly forty-eight milliard roubles in 1941).

But the guarantee for these further prospects is not only quantitative. It was given in the intensive discussion on improvement of the work of party organisations in industry and transport, in the removal of the members of the Central Committee who had failed to cope with their duties and in the public warnings given for unsatisfactory work of highly responsible Commissaries. Above all, it is seen in the growth of the Bolshevik party. Ten years after the revolution the total of members and

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candidate members was a million and a quarter. Twelve years later, by the Congress of 1939, after many changes, it was nearly two and a half millions. To-day it is nearly four millions. In addition there has been a considerable growth in the theoretical level of the party members. Thus the people of the Soviet Union with their new cultural level and their skilled productive force have a vanguard of four millions whose lives are of a special kind, whose energies are devoted to the carrying through of the teachings of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin, to the leap forward of mankind from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom.

The contrast between the capitalist countries and the land of Socialism is not the contrast of unreality with reality. For both are part of the one reality of this epoch of wars and revolutions. But the more in this and other countries of capitalism the workers grasp this higher reality of the U.S.S.R. and see in it the mirror of the future, the more quickly and the more resolutely will they seek the means to attain that future.

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The Cut in the Standard of Living

BY PETER FIELD

REGULAR MONTHLY STATISTICS of the trend of retail trade are published by the government. These statistics exaggerate the volume of trade since they do not take into account the fact that trade diminishes not only because shops sell less, but also because a number of shops are driven into bankruptcy or have to be closed down just short of it. Furthermore the statistics exaggerate the volume of trade because they are based chiefly on the trade results of big shops, chain stores and multiple shops, and these kinds of shops are favoured to-day by the public, which believes that they are better provided with rationed goods.

In spite of these exaggerations of the volume of trade, the official retail trade statistics show the most serious decline in the standard of living ever experienced here in so short a period.

The official statistics show that the money value of retail trade has increased as follows (assuming the last corresponding peace month being equal to 100):

MONTHLY VALUE OF RETAIL SALES DURING THE WAR

(The last corresponding pre-war month = 100)

Month	*1938*	*1939*	*1940*	*1941*
January	—	100	104	103
February	—	100	104	—
March	—	100	113	—
April	—	100	102	—
May	—	100	105	—
June	—	100	102	—
July	—	100	106	—
August	—	100	111	—
September	100	114	108	—
October	100	107	114	—
November	100	101	101	—
December	100	99	96	—

These figures, of course, do not take into account the rise in prices. We can eliminate the influence of prices and compute a rough index of the physical volume of retail sales by deflating the above figures by means of an index of retail prices.

The index of retail prices used for this purpose has been constructed as follows: the different indices (food, clothing, etc.) making up the official cost of living index have been combined into one index, using the weights resulting from the recent cost of living inquiry and leaving out the index for rent. The resulting retail price index is as follows:

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A NEW INDEX OF RETAIL PRICES, 1938 TO 1941

(The last corresponding pre-war month = 100)

Month	*1938*	*1939*	*1940*	*1941*
January	—	100	114	*131
February	—	100	116	—
March	—	100	117	—
April	—	100	119	—
May	—	100	121	—
June	—	100	122	—
July	—	100	123	—
August	—	100	124	—
September	100	103	125	—
October	100	108	127	—
November	100	110	128	—
December	100	112	130	—

**Preliminary.*

By dividing the index of the value of retail sales by the price index we arrive at the following index figures for the quantities sold in retail trade:

MONTHLY QUANTITY OF RETAIL TRADE DURING THE WAR

(The last corresponding pre-war month = 100)

Month	*1938*	*1939*	*1940*	*1941*
January	—	100	91	*78
February	—	100	90	—
March	—	100	96	—
April	—	100	86	—
May	—	100	86	—
June	—	100	84	—
July	—	100	86	—
August	—	100	90	—
September	100	110	86	—
October	100	99	90	—
November	100	92	79	—
December	100	88	74	—

**Preliminary.*

Even these figures, which as already explained exaggerate the volume of retail trade, show that in recent months retail sales have fallen rapidly. They indicate that the volume of goods sold to the people has fallen by more than 20 per cent as compared with the pre-war months. It may be noted that the fall of the standard of living in Hitler-occupied territories has been estimated as between 20 and 30 per cent. *Hence, as far as the cut in the standard of living is concerned, we are not in a very different position to that of the conquered nations of the Continent.*

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Seven Years' Work and Wages

BY G. W. HOLLOWAY

AFTER having a little difficulty over income tax I decided to keep a regular record of my earnings. The following gives particulars and an attempt at an analysis of this earning's record. The period covered is from the first pay-day in 1934 (January 12) to the last pay-day (December 27) in 1940.

In 1934 I worked 142 shifts—at six shifts to the week: this gives a total of 23⅔ weeks, just under a half-year. The rest was dole, due to short-time working. For this work period I received £98 6*s*. 5*d*., which gives a daily average of 13*s*. 3*d*.

1935 shows an improvement in working time—166 4/5 shifts, or 27⅔ weeks. Earnings for this period, £118 7*s*. 0*d*., an increase of £20 on the previous year. Daily average, 14*s*. 6*d*.

1936 shows further improvement with 224 shifts or 37⅓ weeks with a reward (?) of £165 4*s*. 9*d*. This was the year of the national 1*s*. per day increase grudgingly granted by the coal barons. The daily average for this year, including and in spite of the extra 1*s* per day, falls to 14*s*., a decrease of a "tanner" on the previous year.

1937 shows a falling off due mainly to a strike in the early part of the year. This year gives a working period of 209 shifts of 34 5/6 weeks, with its reward of £164 9*s*. 7*d*., giving a daily average of 15*s*. 8*d*., the 1*s*. included.

1938, the year of crisis, gives further improvement with 224 shifts or 37 weeks of work with earnings amounting to £188 10*s* 2*d*., giving a daily average of 15*s*. 9*d*. plus the national 1*s*.

1939, due to six weeks off owing to 'flu, shows a slight decrease in working time, namely, 209 shifts or 34 weeks, with earnings £159 16*s*. 9*d*., giving a daily average of 15*s*. 3*d*., which includes, besides the national 1*s*., a cost-of-living increase. In this year of mounting profits and a steadily increasing cost of living, the actual daily earnings are down to the 1934 level.

1940, with imperialist war in full swing, shows an increase in time worked—248 3/5 shifts, equalling 41½ weeks with earnings of £225 10*s*. 4*d*., giving a daily average wage of 18*s*. 2*d*., in which is included the national 1*s*. and 1*s*. 10*d*. cost-of-living increase, which makes the actual daily earnings 15*s*. 4*d*. This gives a 2*s*. 1*d*. increase over the daily average of 1934.

During thirty years I have, then, worked 1,423 shifts, or about 234 weeks, equal to 4½ years. For these years of work I have received £1,119 17*s*. 0*d*., giving a daily average of 15*s*. 8*d*., which, with the deduction of the above-mentioned 2*s* 10*d*., makes the actual daily earnings 12*s*. 10*d*.

The average weekly wage over this period will, then, amount to about £3 1*s*. 6*d*. At this particular colliery there are certain deductions from wages every week. Enclosed pay ticket (not, owing to present circum-

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stances, for publication) indicates the extent of the deductions. I find that, over this period of seven years, deductions amount to £280 18*s*. 3*d*., or 15*s*. 5*d*. per week, which brings the weekly amount handed to the wife down to £2 6*s* 1*d*. If the present purchasing value of the £ is taken into consideration, this £2 6*s* 1*d*. should really be round about £1 15*s*. 0*d*. What about that as a plea for another 2*s*. a day?

There is another point I would like to stress about this seven years of work and wages. There is a certain class of non-producers—either of wealth or ideas—in this country who are receiving salaries of round about £5,000 a year. Among these can be included such people as the present descendant of Lord Nelson and many Bishops. These non-producers earn, by their labours (?). £5,000 in one year. I, for seven years of "blood, sweat and toil," as dear "Winnie" puts it, have earned £1,119 17*s*. 0*d*. I reckon it will take me another thirty years to catch up with a Bishop's salary for one year.

There is just one other point I would like to make. That is, while at work I can produce anything from 6 to 10 tons of coal per shift. If conditions are good 10 tons is usual. However, working in a difficult district, the average output can be put at 6 tons.

Having worked 1,423 shifts during these seven years, I have, therefore, produced 3,538 tons of coal, or, at the price Londoners are paying, £27,784 of wealth. Even at pit-head price of £1 per ton, I have not done so badly.

Can any bishop, or Lord Nelson, justly claim that they have even produced ideas worth half that amount?

Labour Monthly Development Fund

(*Continued from inside front cover*).

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Ireland and Neutrality

BY PAT DOOLEY

This year's commemoration of the glorious Easter Rebellion of 1916 assumes a new significance. Whilst the eyes of the world are concentrated on the attempts to embroil the Balkans in the war of rival imperialisms, Ireland is similarly subjected to terrific pressure by Britain and America. Pleas to Ireland to realise the "danger"; persuasion to "lease" her ports; plots to increase the existing blockades; and threats of possible invasion are now the order of the day. 129 "patriotic Americans" petition De Valera to release the ports; the visits of Mr. Willkie and Colonel Donovan to Ireland, and the return courtesy of Mr. F. Aitken, Ireland's Minister of Defence Measures, "to examine the possibility of purchasing arms and supplies from America," are the political expressions recording the underlying need of the imperialists to draw Ireland within the orbit of war. Meanwhile, Northern Ireland remains a British garrison, with thousands of troops, for all purposes, at the disposal of the British Government.

Ireland is the victim of a double blockade, Britain's and Germany's. Evidence abounds of the hardships they jointly inflict on the Irish working class. Essential foods and fuels are rationed. Tea, to the Irish as indispensable as conversation, is severely rationed. Tillage, declared De Valera, must be greatly increased or famine faces Ireland. Shortage of oil is causing considerable dislocation in the transport services, with a corresponding increase in unemployment. As in Britain, the mass of the people feel the pinch, whilst the rich seize the opportunity of becoming richer. In Eire:

"The cost of living index (July, 1941—equals 100) rose steeply from 173 in September 1939 to 214 in December 1940 but wages did not rise at anything approaching the same rate." (*Economist*, 15.3.41.)

Conditions are no better in the North of Ireland. December figures show nearly 70,000 unemployed in the six counties.

"The employment would, in fact, have been materially worse if 16,000 workers had not been placed in factories across the Irish Channel." (*Economist*, 15.3.41.)

Meanwhile the political truce between the Holy Trinity of De Valera, the Cosgravites, and the Labour Party balances precariously on unsafe foundations. To establish their stranglehold on the political life of the country as firmly as they exercise it in the economic sphere, the Cosgraveites press for the formation of a Coalition Government, and Lemass, for the Government, wishes "to say nothing that might make it more difficult to accomplish." In this situation, the bureaucracy of the Labour Party and Trade Union Congress of Ireland align themselves with De Valera, and following the example of their British counterparts, remain quiescent whilst attacks are made upon the living standards of the Irish people.

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Happily, the Irish working class are militant and vocal. The latent antagonisms between the big farmers and the small; between the industrialists and the wage workers; between the Republican Nationalists and their opponents now subordinated to the imperialists, are to-day more sharply expressed than ever before. The influential Dublin Trades Council, at its recent meeting, on the motion of the delegate from the Women Workers' Union, a welcome portent, decided upon a public demonstration after the unsatisfactory reception accorded to their deputation to the Government regarding food rationing and prices. Nor is this activity confined to the South. Within the garrison of British imperialism, at Belfast, a representative conference is being organised on the food and fuel situation as it affects the North, while the Youth Advisory Committee of the Belfast Trades Council are calling a conference to launch the Charter of Youths' Rights for Northern Ireland.

With the growth of discontent, Republican feeling grows ever stronger and more clearly reveals the vacillations of De Valera in his political bouts with Churchill. Forced by the overwhelming desire for neutrality, expressed by the common people, De Valera has had to declare for neutrality whilst coquetting with Churchill. A powerful section of Ireland's rich, tied to England by the bonds of trade and finance, hope to profit by their assistance to Britain, and their desires receive no decisive check at the hands of De Valera, who, instead of rousing the people against them, has drawn them into leading State posts.

Thus De Valera is able to save his face before his followers, while Britain, aided by a Fifth Column within the Dail, accepts the verbal protestation of "strict neutrality" but at the same time brazenly releases a campaign of slander against Irish neutrality in the British press and continues the campaign, conjointly with America, for the economic and political subjection of Ireland to the needs of Britain's war economy and political recapture of the ports, Queenstown, Berehaven and Lough Swilly. These ports were returned to Ireland under the Anglo-Eire Trade Agreement of 1938, Britain's compromise after the British economic war upon Ireland following the withholding of the Land Annuities by De Valera.

The time is opportune and the need great for the working class of Ireland to gather its forces and press for the satisfaction of its social and economic demands, the *real* Independence of the country and the end of Partition. A recent manifesto of the Irish Communist Party exposing the manœuvrings of De Valera and the rackets of the profiteers calls for a Dublin, as well as a Belfast, All-In Conference, followed by a National All-Party Workers' Conference to discuss measures to combat the menace of poverty and imminent war. It says:

"The Communist Party, on behalf of its members and supporters, pledges itself as part of its contribution to the fight to preserve and extend neutrality and to advance to the full unity and independence of the country, to unceasing agitation and struggle for such a Conference which would decide on an agreed policy for the militant movement in defence of the bread, homes, lives and jobs of the people. Issues of life and death face the Irish people, the hour is late, the threat urgent. It is a matter of honour for all those charged with the leadership of any section of the Labour or Republican movement to see that the common people act to save their country, their homes and their very existence."

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The struggle of the Irish workers is of great importance to the British working class as well. We may recall the words of Marx:

"I have become more and more convinced—and the only question is to bring this conviction home to the English working class—*that it can never do anything* decisive here in England until it separates its policy with regard to Ireland in the most definite way from the policy of the ruling classes, until it not only makes common cause with the Irish, but actually takes the initiative in dissolving the Union established in 1801, replacing it by free federal relationship." (Letter of Marx to Kugelmann, November 29th, 1869.)

The "decisive" things the British working class can achieve to-day are to uphold the demand for Ireland's Unity, Independence and Neutrality. Continuous support for the demand for the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland; support for the movement "Hands off the Ports"; support for the demand that the Eire and British Governments disclose the whereabouts of Frank Ryan and guarantee his safe conduct to Ireland—and not least, support for the activities of the Connolly Club, the organisation of militant Irish Nationalist workers in Britain—these are the measures necessary to consolidate the bonds of unity between the Irish and British workers.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Lithuania's New Way. Anna Louise Strong. (Lawrence & Wishart.) 1*s*. 76 pp.
Leninism. J. Stalin. (Allen & Unwin.) 10*s*. 6*d*. 667 pp.
Advisory Bodies. Edited by R. V. Vernon & N. Masergh. (Allen & Unwin.) 5*s*. 149 pp.
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